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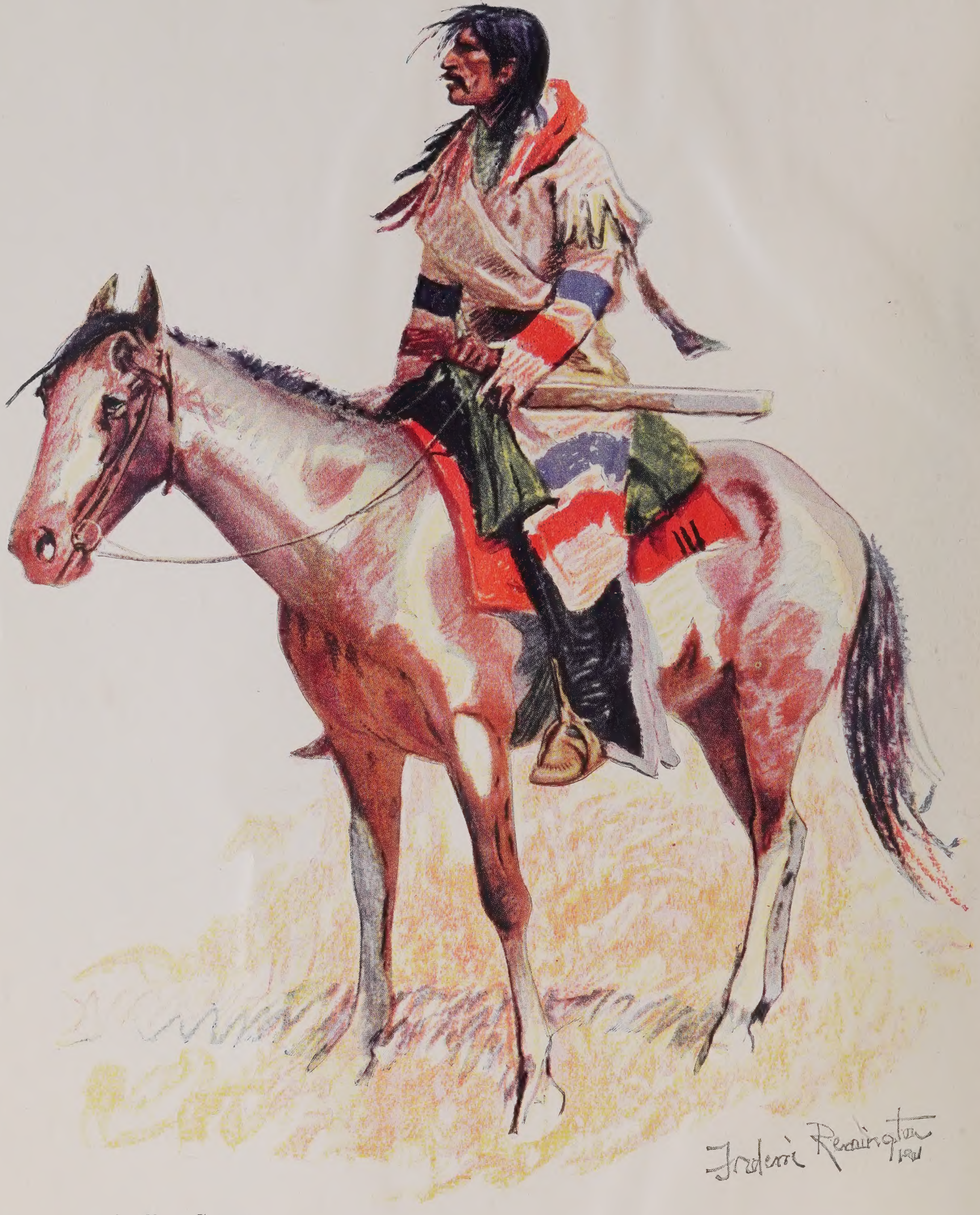
The Book of the American Indian

Written by Hamlin Garland

Pictured by Frederic Remington

THE BOOK OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN


Frederic Remington 1901

An Indian Scout

Illustration from
A BUNCH OF BUCKSKINS
by Frederic Remington

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THE BOOK OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN

Written by
HAMLIN GARLAND
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FREDERIC REMINGTON

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THE BOOK OF THE
AMERICAN INDIAN

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WAHIAH—A SPARTAN MOTHER

THE BOOK OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN

WAHIAH—A SPARTAN MOTHER

I

FROM a casual point of view the Indian Agency at Darlington was dull and commonplace if not actually dispiriting. The sun blazed hot in the roadway which ran between the licensed shops, the office and the issue house. Lean dogs were slinking about. A few bedraggled red women with shawls over their heads stood talking softly together on the trader's porch. A group of warriors in the shade of the blacksmith shop were discussing some ancient campaign, while now and then a clerk in shirt sleeves, his hands full of papers, moved across the plaza, his step quickened by the sting of the sun.

A little back from the street the school building sat bleakly exposed on the sod, flanked on each side by still more inhospitable dormitories—all humming with unseen life. Across the river—the one grateful, gracious touch of all—the yellowed conical tents of the Cheyennes rose amidst green willows, and far beyond, on the beautiful velvet green of the prairies, their untethered ponies fed.

To the careless observer this village was lonely, repulsive; to the sympathetic mind it was a place of drama, for there the passions, prejudices, ancestral loves and hates of two races met and clashed.

There the man of the polished stone age was trying, piteously, tragically trying, to take on the manner of life of a race ten thousand years in advance of him, and there a few devoted Quakers were attempting to lead the nomads into the ways of the people of the plow.

The Cheyennes, at the time practically military prisoners, had given but a nominal consent to the education of their children, and many individuals openly opposed it. For the most part the pupils in the school wore buckskin shirts and were the wastrels and orphans of the tribe, neglected and stupid. The fine, bold sons of the principal chiefs would not surrender their freedom, and their contempt for those who did was expressed in the cry, "Ahyah! Whiteman, Whiteman!"

It will appear that the problem before the teacher of the Cheyenne and Arapahoe school in those days was not merely to govern the pupils in the schoolroom, but to induce men like Tomacham and Tontonava to send their own brave and handsome sons. With great native wit and shrewdness, Seger, the newly appointed master, said to the agent: "Our point of attack is the child. The red man's love for his offspring is very deep. We must also convince the mothers. They are the conservative forces."

The young teacher, Seger, had already won many friends among the chief men by his unfailing helpfulness as well as sympathy with their ways, and not content with the few pupils he had, he went out among the tepees pleading the cause of education with the fathers in the hearing of the mothers.

The old men listened gravely and for the most part courteously—never interrupting, weighing each word as it fell. Some of them admitted the reasonableness of his plea. "We think you are telling us the truth," they said, "but our hearts will not let us go with you on the road. We love the old things. We do not like these new things. We despise the white man's clothing—we do not want our sons to go crop-haired like a black man. We have left the warpath—never to go back to it. What is before us we do not know—but we are not yet ready to give our children into your hands." And the women sitting near applauded and said, "Aye, aye!"

Seger argued: "What will you do? The buffaloes are gone. The elk and deer are going. Your sons cannot live by hunting—they must live as the white man lives—by tilling the earth."

"All that is strange," darkly answered Tomacham. "We are as the Great Spirit made us. We cannot change. If the Great One wished us to be white why did He not make us so in the first place?"

Nevertheless, Seger's words sank deep in the ears of Tomacham and Wahiah, his wife, and one day the chief appeared at the door of the school bringing his son Atokan, a splendid young lad of fourteen—handsome as a picture of Hiawatha, with his fringed leggins, beaded shirt, shining, braided hair and painted cheeks. Behind—a long way back—came the mother.

"You see I have brought my son," began the chief after Seger's delighted greeting.

"It is good. He will make a fine man."

The chief's face clouded. "I do not bring him to become like these," and he pointed at a couple of stupid, crop-haired boys who stood gaping at him. "I bring my son to learn to read and write, but he must not be clipped and put into white man's clothing. He can follow your ways without losing his hair. Our way of dress pleases us better."

Seger was obstinate. "I will not take him. If he comes he must do as the rest—and he must obey me!"

The old chief stood in silence looking on his son, whose grace and dignity appealed even to the teacher's unæsthetic mind, and his eyes grew dim with prophetic sadness. The mother drew near, and Tomacham turned and spoke to her and told her what the white man said.

"No, no!" she wailed.

Then Tomacham was resolved: "No, my friend, I cannot do it. Let me have him one more day. I cannot bear to leave him to become a white man to-day. See, there is his mother, waiting, weeping; let him be a small, red brave till to-morrow. I have given my word; I will bring him."

With some understanding of the chief's ache in the heart Seger consented, and Tomacham let his young warrior stay home for one more day of the old kind.

What sorrowful ceremonies took place in that well-smoked tepee Seger did not know, but next day the chief came again; he was very sorrowful and very tender, but the boy's face was sullen, his head drooping.

Slowly the father said: "Friend, I have thought all night of what you have said to me. The mother is singing a sad song in our tepee, but we have decided. We give our boy into your hands; teach him the road."

And with a quiet word to his son the heroic red man turned and went away to hide his quivering lips. It was as if he had given his son to an alien tribe, never to see him again.

When the mother saw her boy next day she burst into a moan of resentful pain. All his wild, free grace was gone. His scissored hair was grotesque. His clumsy gray coat pinched his shoulders, his trousers were absurdly short, and his boots hard and clumsy. He slunk into the circle of the fire like a whipped dog and would not lift his head even in reply to questions. Tomacham smoked hard to keep back the tears, but his mind was made up, his word given. "We are on the road—we cannot turn back," he said, though it cut him to the heart to see his eaglet become a barnyard fowl.

II

By this time Seger had reduced the school to something like order, and the pupils were learning fast; but truancy continued to render his afternoon sessions farcical, for as soon as they had eaten their midday meal many of the children ran away to the camp across the river and there remained the entire afternoon. Others paid no heed to the bell, but played on till weary before returning to the school. In all this rebellion Atokan was a leader, and Seger, after meditating long, determined on a form of discipline which might have appalled the commander of a regiment of cavalry. He determined to apply the rod.

Now this may seem a small thing, but it was not; it was a very momentous thing. It was indeed the most dangerous announcement he could make to a warlike tribe chafing under restraint, for red people are most affectionate parents and very seldom lay violent hands upon their children or even speak harshly to them. Up to this time no white man had ever punished a red child, and when Seger spoke to the agent about it he got no help; on the contrary, the old Quaker said:

"Friend Seger, I think thee a very rash young man and I fear thee will involve us all in a bloody outbreak." Then he added, "Can't thee devise something else?"

"I must have discipline," argued Seger. "I can't have my pupils making a monkey of me. There are only four or five that need welting, and if you give me leave to go ahead I'll make 'em toe the mark; otherwise, I'll resign."

"Thee can go ahead," testily exclaimed the agent. "But thee sees how we are situated. We have no troops in call. Thee knows, also, that I do not approve of force; and yet," he added, in reflection, "we have made a failure of the school—thee alone seems to have any control of the pupils. It is not for me to criticize. Proceed on thy way, but I will not be responsible for any trouble thee may bring upon thyself."

"I will take all that comes," responded Seger—who had been trained in the school of the Civil War, "and I will not involve you in any outbreak."

That night Seger made his announcement: "Hereafter every scholar must obey my bell—and return to the schoolroom promptly. Those who do not will be whipped."

The children looked at him as if he had gone crazy.

He went on: "Go home and tell your people. Ask them to think it over—but remember to be here at sunset, and after this every bell must be obeyed instantly."

The children ran at once to the camp, and the news spread like some invisible vapor, and soon every soul in the entire agency, red and white alike, was athrill with excitement. The half-breeds (notoriously timorous) hastened to warn the intrepid schoolmaster: "Don't do that. They will kill you." The old scouts and squawmen followed: "Young feller, you couldn't dig out of the box a nastier job—you better drop it right now and skip."

"I am going to have discipline," said Seger, "or tan the jacket of every boy I've got."

Soon after this he met Tomacham and Tontonava, both men of great influence. After greeting him courteously Tomacham said:

"I hear that you said you were going to whip our children. Is this true?"

"It is!" answered Seger, curtly.

"That is very wrong and very foolish," argued Tontonava. "We did not give our children into your care to be smitten with rods as the soldiers whip mules."

"If the children act like mules I will whip them," persisted Seger. "I punish only bad children—I do not beat good ones."

"It is not our custom to strike our children. Do you think we will permit white men to do so?" asked Tontonava, breathing hard.

Assuming an air of great and solemn deliberation, Seger said, using the sign language to enforce his words: "Go home and think of this. The Great Father has built this schoolhouse for your children. He has given them warm clothing and good food. He has given them beds to sleep in and a doctor to help them when they are sick. Now listen. Miokany is speaking. So long as they enjoy all these things they are bound to obey me. They must obey me, their teacher," and he turned and left the two old men standing there, amazed and indignant.

That night all the camps were filled with a discussion of this wondrous thing. Seger's threat was taken up formally by the men in council and informally by the women. It was pivotal, this question of punishment—it marked their final subjection to the white man.

"If we lose our children, then surely we are doomed to extinction," Tomacham said.

"Let us fight!" cried fierce Unko. "What is the use of sitting here like chained wolves till we starve and die?" Let us go out against this white man and perish gloriously." And a few applauded him.

But the graver men counseled patience and peace.

"We do not fear death—but we do not wish to be bound and sent away into the mysterious hot lands where our brethren languish."

"Then let us go to the school and frighten 'Johnny Smoker' so that he will not dare to whip any child," cried Unko.

To this Tomacham answered: "'Johnny Smoker' is my friend. I do not wish to harm him. Let us see him again and counsel with him."

"No," answered Unko. "Let us face him and command him to let our children alone. If he strikes my child he must die."

And to this many of the women cried out in piercing nasal tones: "Ah, that is good—do that!"

But Wahiah, the mother of Atokan, looked at the ground and remained silent.

III

When the pupils next assembled they were as demure as quails, and Seger knew that they had been warned by their parents not to incur their teacher's displeasure; but Atokan looked aside, his proud head lifted. Beside him sat a fine boy, two years younger, son of Unko, and it was plain that they were both ready to rebel.

The master recognized the gravity of the moment. If he did not punish, according to his word, his pupils would despise him, his discipline was at an end; and to stripe the backs of these highspirited lads was to invite death—that he knew better than any white man could tell him. To provoke an outbreak would be a colossal crime, and yet he was a stubborn little man—persistent as a bulldog—capable of sacrificing himself in working out a theory. When a friendly half-breed came late that night and warned him that the camp was in debate whether to kill him or not he merely said: "You tell them I am doing the will of the Great Father at Washington and I am not afraid. What they do to me will fly to Washington as the light flies, and the soldiers will come back as swiftly."

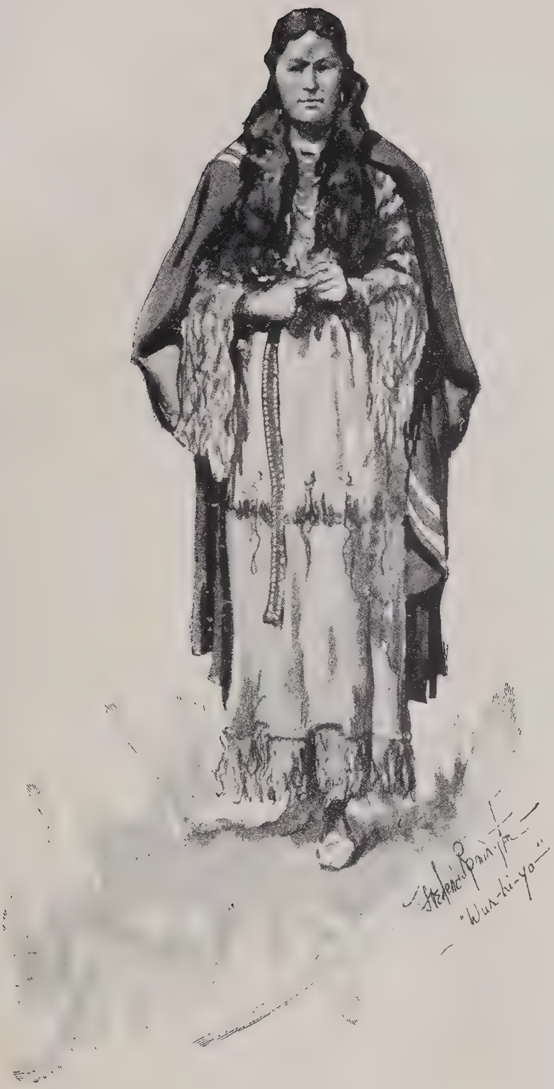
Immediately after school opened next morning several of the parents of the children came quickly in and took seats, as they were accustomed to do, along the back wall behind the pupils. They were graver than usual—but otherwise gave no sign of anger and remained decorously quiet. Among them was Wahiah.

The master went on with firm voice and ready smile with the morning's work, well aware that the test of his authority would come after intermission, when he rang the bell to recall his little squad to their studies.

As the children ran out to play all the old people followed and took seats in the shade of the building, silent and watchful. The assistant teacher, a brave little woman, was white with excitement as Seger took the bell some ten minutes later and went to the door personally to give the signal for return. He rang as cheerily as if he were calling to a feast, but many of the employees shuddered as if it were their death knell.

The larger number of the children came scurrying, eager to show their obedience, but a squad of five or six of the boys remained where they were, as if the sound of the bell had not reached them. Seger rang again and called personally: "Come, boys, time to work."

At this three others broke away from the rebellious group and came slowly toward him, but Atokan and the son of Unko turned toward the river.



A Kiowa Maiden

That Indian parents are very proud of their children's progress is evidenced by the eagerness with which they send their sons and daughters to the schools established by the Government on the different Indian reservations. The Kiowa maiden here pictured is one of the many Indian girls and boys who more and more are availing themselves of the opportunity to obtain an education and thus fit themselves to take their places in civilized society.

Illustration from
THE WEST FROM A CAR WINDOW
by Richard Harding Davis

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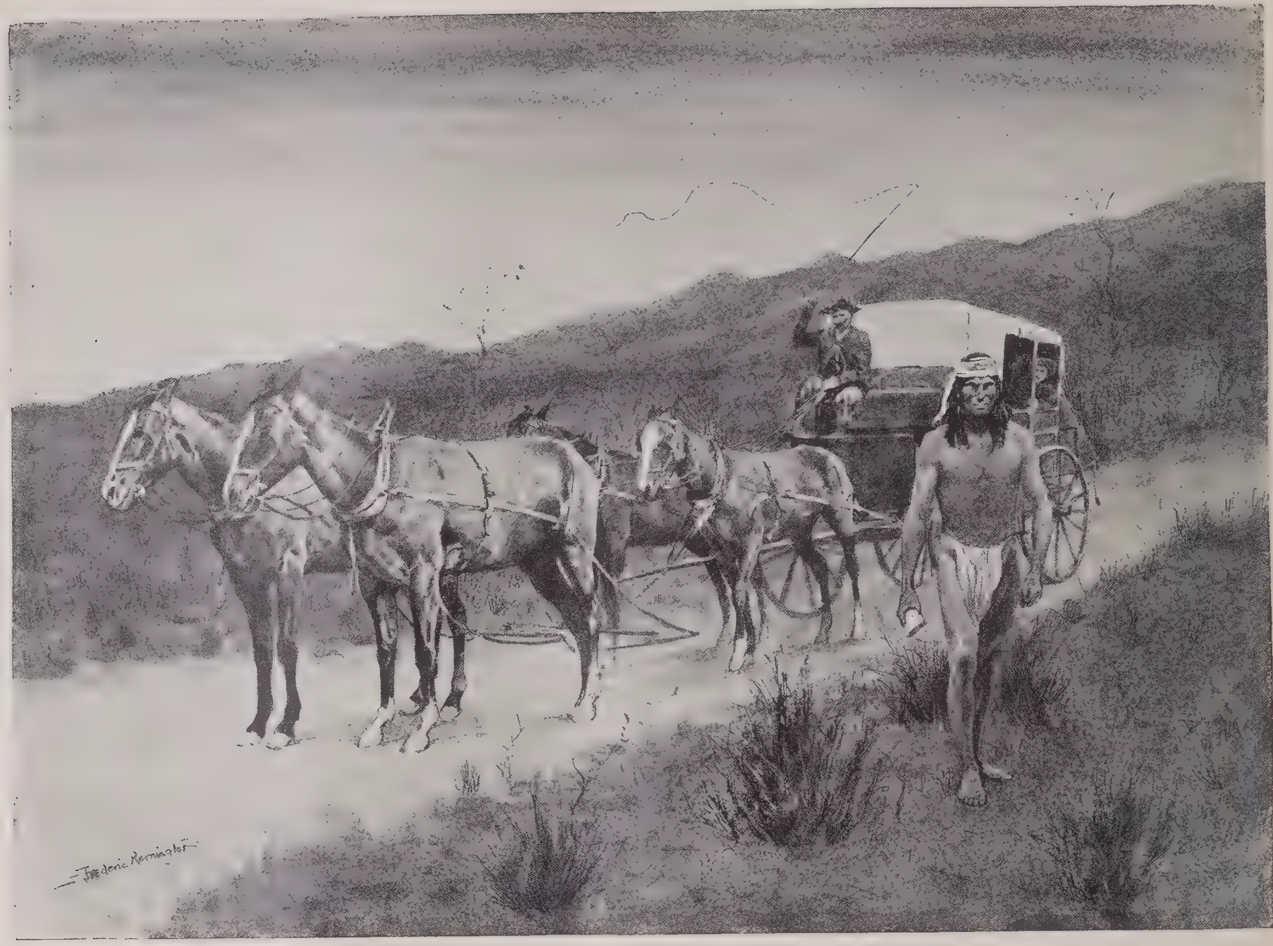
HARPER'S WEEKLY, *May 14, 1892*


Frederic Remington

The Red Man's Parcel Post

Illustration from
A PILGRIM ON THE GILA
by Owen Wister

Originally published in
Harper's Magazine, *November, 1895*

Seger made a pleasant little speech to the obedient ones and ended: "I know we are to be good friends in the future as we have been in the past," but a little shiver passed over the school as he went out, stern faced and resolute, to recall the truants.

The wife of Unko rose and scuttled away to give the alarm, but Wahiah stood with her robe drawn over her lips as if in struggle to repress a cry. Tomacham smoked on quietly, waiting the issue.

Meanwhile, Atokan strolled along the path, shooting his arrow at small objects on the ground, apparently oblivious of his teacher's hastening footsteps.

When within hearing Seger called: "You know the rules, Atokan. Why do you not answer the bell?"

Atokan made no reply, and Seger was tempted to lay hands upon him; but to do this would involve a smart chase, and, besides, he was too wise to seem to be angry. He followed the boys, pleading with them, till Atokan turned and said: "You go away. Bimeby I come."

"You must come now!"

"You going whip me?"

"Yes!"

"Then I don't come."

After half an hour of this humiliating parley Seger had the dubious satisfaction of seeing the truant set his face toward the schoolroom—for Atokan knew his father and mother were waiting, and into his heart came the desire to test "Johnny Smoker's" courage. With insolent slowness he led the way past the group of his elders, on into the schoolroom, followed by twenty-five or thirty Cheyennes and Arapahoes. Some of the men were armed and all were stern. The women's faces were both sour and sad. It was plain that something beside brute force must be employed in dealing with the situation. Seger knew these people. Turning suddenly to Tomacham he asked:

"My friend, what do you send your children to school for?"

Taken by surprise, the chief hesitated. "To learn to read and write and speak like the white man."

"What do you think I am here for?"

"To show our children the way," he reluctantly answered. "But not to punish them."

Seger was addressing the women through the chief. "Do you think I can teach your children if they are out shooting birds?"

"No, I do not think so."

"Do you think it would be honest if I took pay for teaching your children and let them run to camp all the time?"

"No, I think it is necessary that the children be kept in school—but you must not whip them."

Seger faced Unko. "What kind of a person do you want to have teach your children—a liar?"

"No, a liar is bad for them."

Unko saw the drift of Seger's remarks, and he moved about uneasily, the butt of his pistol showing from beneath his blanket.

Seger then said in a loud voice, "I am not a liar!" and repeated this in signs. "I told your children I would whip them if they did not obey me, and now I am going to do it! You know me; I do not say 'I am your friend,' and then work evil to your children. Jack, come here!" A little boy rose slowly and came and stood beside his teacher, who went on: "This is an orphan. He was dying in his grandmother's tepee when I went to him. I took him—I nursed him—I sat by his bed many nights when you were asleep. Jennie," he called again, "you come to me!" A shy little girl with scarred face tiptoed to her beloved teacher. "This one came to me so covered with sores that she was terrible to see. I washed her—she was almost blind. I made her see. I have done these things many times. There is not a child here that has not been helped by me. I am not boasting—this is my duty, it is the work the Great Father has told me to do. It is my work also to make your children obey me. I am the friend of all red men. I have eaten in your lodges.

I have been in council with you. I am not a liar. It is my duty to whip disobedient children, and I will do it. Atokan, come up here!"

The boy rose and came forward, a smoldering fire in his black eyes. As Seger laid a hand on his shoulder and took up his whip Wahiah uttered a shuddering moan. A sinister stir went through the room. The white man's dominion was about to be put to the final test. In Wahiah's heart a mighty struggle was in progress. Love and pride in her son demanded that she put an end to the whipping, but her sense of justice, her love for Seger and her conviction that the boy was wrong kept her fixed and silent, though her lips quivered and the tears ran down her face. Tomacham's broad breast heaved with passion, but he, too, remained silent.

"Will you obey me?" asked the master.

Receiving no answer, he took firm hold of Atokan's collar and addressed the spectators. "Little Unko is younger than Atokan. He was led away by him. I will therefore give both whippings to Atokan," and he brought the hissing withe down over the boy's shoulders. Again a moan of involuntary protest went through the room. Never before had a white man struck a Cheyenne child and remained unpunished for his temerity—and no other man, not even the agent himself, could have struck that blow and survived the wrath of Tomacham.

Atokan seized the lapel of his coat in his teeth, and bit hard in order to stifle any moan of pain the sting of the whip might wring from him. His was the heart of a warrior, for, though the whip fell hissing with speed he uttered no cry, and when the rod was worn to a fragment he remained silent as a statue, refusing to answer a single word.

Seger, convinced that the punishment was a failure unless it conquered the culprit, caught up another willow withe and wore it out upon him, to no effect—for, casting a glance at the pieces lying on the floor, the boy's lips curled in a smile of disdain as if to say: "I am a warrior; I do not cry!"

Realizing his failure, Seger caught him with a wrestler's twist, threw him across his knee, and beat him with the flat of his hand. The suddenness of this attack, the shame of the attitude, added to the pain he was already suffering, broke the boy's proud spirit. He burst into loud lamentation, dropped to the floor, and lay in a heap, sobbing like a child.

Straightening up, the teacher looked about him, expecting to meet a roused and ready group of warriors. Every woman and all the children were wildly moaning and sobbing. The men with stern and sorrowful faces were struggling in silence to keep back the tears. The resolute little white man had conquered by his logic, his justice, his bravery.

"Atokan, will you obey me?" he asked.

"Yes, sir," the boy answered—his spirit broken.

Turning to the mother, Seger very gently said: "I do not like to do this, Wahiah; it hurts my heart as it does yours, but it was necessary. Tomacham, once I was a soldier—like you. I was taught to obey. You may kill me for this, but the Great Father at Washington will say, 'Miokany died doing his duty.' I know how hard it is for you to plow and reap and do as the white man does, but it must be done or you will die. Your children can do nothing till they learn to speak the tongue. I am here to do that work. The children must stay in school. They must obey me. I do not whip good children who obey—only those who are bad. Now you old people go home and think over what I have said, and we will return to our lessons."

Then a wonderful, an incredible, thing happened! Tomacham rose and took Seger's hand and shook it silently in token of conviction. But Wahiah, the mother of Atokan, with tears still streaming down her cheeks, pressed the teacher's hand in both of hers and looked into his face as if to speak, but could not; then snatching her son's symbols of freedom, his bow and arrows, she broke them over her knee and stamped on the fragments in the face of all the school. "Obey Miokany," she commanded, with Spartan vigor, and, turning swiftly, went out, followed by the sad and silent chieftain.

NISTINA

NISTINA

THERE was lamentation in the lodges of Sunmaker's people, for the white soldiers had taken away the guns of Hawk's young warriors, and now they were to be sent away into lands of captivity. Huddled in big wagons, the young men sat, downcast and sullen, ashamed to weep, yet choking with grief and despair.

"Had I known this," said Hawk to the captain of the escort, "I would have died fighting," and this defiant word he uttered in the harsh, booming tone of a village crier. It was heard by everyone in the camp, and the old women broke forth into wailing war songs, which made the fingers of sedate old sages clinch.

But the blue-coated soldiers, ranked and ready, stood with loaded guns in their hands, calmly observant, and the colonel sat his horse, not far away, ready to give the signal for departure.

Hawk, young, handsome, and reckless, for some ruffianism put upon him by a band of cattlemen, had organized a raid of retaliation, and for this outbreak the government was sending him and his band to Florida—a hot, strange land, far in the South. He, as its unconquered leader, sat bound and helpless in one of the head wagons, his feet chained to a rod, his hands ironed, and working like the talons of an eagle.

It was hard to sit thus in the face of his father and mother, but it was harder yet to know that Nistina, the daughter of Sunmaker, with her blanket over her face, sat weeping at the door of her father's lodge. All the girls were moaning, and no one knew that Nistina loved Hawk—no one but her inseparable friend, Macosa, the daughter of Crane.

Hawk knew it, for they had often met at the river's edge of a morning, when she came for water.

Now they were to part without one word of love, with no touch of hands, never to see each other again, for it was well known that those who went into that far country never returned—the breath of the great salt water poisoned them.

At last the colonel uttered a word of command. A bugle rang out. The piercing cries of the bereaved women broke forth again, wild and heart-breaking: the whips cracked like pistol shots, the mules set their shoulders to the collars, and the blue chariots and their hopeless captives moved slowly out across the prairie.

Hawk turned his head and caught one last glance from Nistina as she lifted her face to him, flung her robe over her head, and fell face downward on the earth, crushed, broken, and despairing.

With teeth set like those of a grizzly bear, the young chief strained at his cords, eager to fight and die in the face of his tribe, but the white man's cruel chains were too strong. He fell back exhausted, too numb with despair to heed the taunt of the white soldier riding beside the wheel, cynical, profane, and derisive.

And while the young prisoner sat thus, with bowed head and low-hanging, lax hands, the little village of his people was lost to view—hidden by the willows on the river's bank.

In the months which followed, the camp of Sunmaker resumed its accustomed round of duties and pleasure. The babes rollicked on the grass, the old men smoked placidly in their council lodges, and planned their next buffalo hunt; the children went reluctantly to the agency school of a morning, and came home with flying feet at night. All seemed as placid as a pool into which a suicide has sunk; but no word came to Nistina, from whose face the shadow never lifted. She had never been a merry girl like Macosa. She had been shy and silent and wistful even as a child, and as the months passed without a message from Hawk, she moved to her duties as silent as a shadow. Macosa, when the spring came again, took another lover, and laughed and said, "They have forgotten us, that Elk and Hawk."

Nistina had many suitors, for was she not Sunmaker's daughter, and tall and handsome besides? Mischievous Macosa, even after her marriage, kept her friend's secret, but she could not forbear to tease her when they were alone together. "Hawk is a bad young man," she said. "He has found another girl by this time. Why don't you listen to Kias?" To such questions Nistina made no answer.

At the end of a year even Sunmaker, introspective as he was, could not fail to remark upon her loneliness. "My daughter, why do you seem so sad? There are many young men singing sweet songs for you to hear, yet you will not listen. It is time you took thought of these things."

"I do not wish to marry," she replied.

Then the old father became sorrowful, for he feared his loved one had placed her heart on some white soldier, and one day he called her to him and said: "My daughter, the Great Spirit decreed that there should be people of many colors on the earth. He called each good in his place, but it is not good that they mate one with the other. If a white man comes to speak soft words into your ears, turn away. He will work evil, and not good. Why do you not take a husband among your own people, as others do, and be content? You are of the age when girls marry."

To this she replied: "My heart is not set on any white man, and I do not wish to marry. Let me stay with you and help to keep your lodge."

The old man's voice trembled as he said: "My daughter, since my son is gone, you are my staff. It is good to see you in our lodge, but I do not like to see you sad."

Then she pretended to laugh, and said, "I am not sad," and ran away.

When she was gone Sunmaker called Vetcora and told her what had happened. She smoked the pipe he handed to her and listened patiently. When he had finished speaking, she said:

"She will come round all right. All girls are not alike. By and by the true one will come, and then you'll see her change her song. She will be keeping her own lodge soon."

But Sunmaker was troubled by his daughter's frequent visits to the agency across the river, and by her intimacy with Neeta, the daughter of Hahko, who had been away to school, and who had returned much changed, being neither white woman nor red.

She was living alone in a small hut on the river bank, and was not a good woman for Nistina to visit.

He could not know that his daughter went there because Neeta could read the white man's papers, and would know if anything had happened to Hawk. No one knew, either, that Nistina slyly asked about learning to read. She laughed when she asked these questions, as though the matter were of no consequence. "How long did it take you to learn to read? Is it very hard to learn to write?"

"Oh no; it is very easy," Neeta replied, boastingly, and when Nistina went away her eyes were very thoughtful.

Again and again she called before she could bring herself to the point of asking Neeta to go with her to the head of the school.

Neeta laughed. "Ho! Are you going to school? You will need to hump low over your toes, for you will go among the smallest girls."

Nistina did not waver. "Come, go with me."

With a smile on her face Neeta led the way to the office of the superintendent. "Professor Morten, I bring you a new scholar."

Morten, a tall, grave-faced man, looked up from his desk, and said: "Why, it's Nistina! Good morning, Nistina."

"Mornin'," said she, as well as she could.

"She wants to go to school, eh? Well, better late than never," he added, with a smile.

"Tell him I want to work and earn money," said Nistina.

When Neeta interpreted this, the teacher exclaimed: "Well, well! This is most astonishing! Why, I thought she hated the white man's ways!"

"I think she want to marry white man," remarked Neeta.

Mr. Morten looked at her coldly. "I hope not. You're a mighty smart girl, Neeta, but I don't like the way you carry on."

Neeta smiled broadly, quite unabashed. "I'm all settled down now—no more skylarking round. I'm keeping house."

"Well, see that you keep settled. I don't understand this change in Nistina, but you tell her I'll put her in charge of Mrs. Morten, and we'll do the best we can for her. But tell her to send all these white men away; tell her not to listen to them."

To Nistina Neeta said, "He says he will let you help his squaw, and she will teach you how to read and write."

Nistina's heart failed her when she heard this, for she had seen Mrs. Morten many times, and had heard many disturbing stories of her harshness. She was a tall, broad-shouldered woman, with keen gray eyes and a loud voice.

At last Mr. Morten turned, and said: "Nistina, you may come this afternoon after four o'clock, and we will arrange the whole matter. I am glad you are going to forsake Indian ways, which are very bad. Be a good girl, and you will be happy."

When Neeta had explained what he said Nistina burst into a low cry, and, covering her face with her blanket, rushed away.

"That's the last you'll see of her," said Neeta, maliciously. "She likes the Indian ways best."

But Nistina was moved by a deeper impulse than fickle-hearted Neeta could comprehend. A sick boy had returned from Florida a few days before—a poor dying lad—and to Nistina he had brought word from young Hawk. "I am studying so that I can send words on paper, like the white man," the message ran. "By and by I will send a white word to you."

This message instantly sank deep, although Nistina gave no sign. She had more than the usual shyness of the maidens of her tribe, and it was painful to her to have even this vague message transmitted by another.

The girl thought long. She wished to send a message to her lover, but for some days could not bring herself to confide in Neeta. Days went by, and her resolution remained unformed. Nearly every evening she had been going to see Neeta, but always her courage had failed her, and then came the thought: "I, too, will learn to write and to read, and then I can tell him how much I love him, and that I will wait till I am old and I will love no one else."

There was a great deal of gossip among the red women. "She is going to marry a white soldier, that Nistina," they said. "She is working for money to buy fine beads and cloth."

"It may be," said her stepmother. "She does not open her heart to me. She talks no more than an owl."

The teachers marveled at 'Tina's dullness in arithmetic and her amazing progress in writing. In an incredibly short time she was able to scrawl a note to her lover. It was a queer little letter, written with painful exactness, in imitation of the copybooks:

> I heard you words what you sent. They was good words. It made my heart glad that words Black Fox which he brought. I am wait all time for you. No one else is in my thoughts. This letter I am written me myself all lone—no one is help me. No one knows that I put it in puss-tofis. I send mogasuns.
> NISTINA.

With this letter all stamped and directed, and the packages of moccasins, she hurried with beating heart to the store in which the post-office occupied a corner. There she hovered like a mother partridge about its nest, coming and going, till a favorable moment offered. She knew just what to do. She had rehearsed it all in her mind a hundred times, and when she had slipped the letter into the slit she laid the package on the window, and flew away to watch and to wait for a word from the far-away land.

Weeks passed, and her heart grew sad and heavy. She dared not ask for a letter, but lingered at the store till the clerks grew jocose and at last familiar, and her heart was bitter toward all white men.

In her extremity she went to Macosa, who was now a matronly wife, mother of a sturdy son, and asked her to go to the post-office and inquire for a letter.

"A letter!" exclaimed she. "Who is going to write you a letter?"

After much persuasion she consented to go, but returned empty handed. She had only half regarded Nistina's request, but as the tears came to her friend's eyes, she believed, and all of the goodness of her heart arose, and she said:

"Don't cry. I will go every day and ask, if you wish me to."

It is hard to wait for a letter when the letter is the one thing in life worth waiting for, and Nistina was very silent and very sad all the time, and her mistress wondered at this; but her questions brought no reply from the girl, who kept at her writing diligently, steadily refusing to confuse her mind with other things. She did not seem to wish to talk—only to write at every spare moment, and each day her writing grew in beauty of line till it was almost as beautiful as the printed copy.

At last she composed another letter:

> HAWK. My friend. I not hearing from you. If you are sick you don't write. My heart is now very sad. May be you die by this time. Long time I am here waiting. Listening for your words I am standing each day. No one my loving but you. Come home you get away quick, for I all time waiting.
>
> NISTINA.

After she had mailed this Nistina suddenly lost all interest in her studies, and went back to the lodge of her father. In her heart she said: "If he does not answer me I will go out on the hill and cry till I die. I do not care to live if he is not coming to me."

She took her place in her father's lodge as before, giving no explanation of her going nor the reason for her return. The kindly old chief smoked and gazed upon her sadly, and at last said, gently:

"My daughter, you are sad and silent. Once you laughed and sang at your sewing. What has happened to you? My child has a dark face."

"I am older. I am no longer a child," she said, unsmilingly.

And at last, in the middle of the third winter, when the white people were giving presents to each other, a letter and a little package came for Nistina, and Macosa came running with them.

"Here is your talking leaf," she said. "Now I think you will laugh once more. Read it, for I am very curious."

But Nistina snatched the precious package and ran into her lodge, to be alone with her joy.

It was a marvelous thing. There was the letter—a blue one—with her name spelled on it in big letters, *Nistina*, but she opened the package first. It contained a shining pouch, and in the pouch was a necklace of wondrous beads such as she had never seen, and a picture of her lover in white man's dress. How strange he looked with his hair cut short! She hardly knew him.

Her heart beat strong and loud as she opened the letter, and read the first words, "Nistina, I am loving you." After that she was confused, for Hawk could not write as well as she, and she read with great trouble, but the end she understood—"I am coming home."

She rose and walked to her father's lodge, where Macosa sat. She entered proudly, the letter in her hand. Her head was lifted, her eyes shone with pride.

"My letter is from Hawk," she said, quietly. "He is coming home."

And at this message Macosa and Vetcora covered their mouths in sign of inexpressible astonishment.

Sunmaker smoked on with placid face till he began to understand it all; then he said: "My daughter, you warm my heart. Sit beside me and tell me of this wonderful thing."

Then she spoke, and her story was to him a sweet relief from care. "It is good," he said. "Surely the white people are wonder-working beings."

THE IRON KHIVA

THE IRON KHIVA

I

FOR countless generations a gentle brown people had dwelt high on the top of a mesa—far in the desert. Their houses rose like native forms of sandstone ledges on the crest of the rocky hills—seemed indeed a part of the cliffs themselves.

To join the old women climbing the steep path laden with water bottles of goatskin, to mingle with the boys driving home the goats—and to hear the girls chattering on the roofs was to forget modern America. A sensitive nature facing such scenes shivered with a subtle transport such as travelers once felt in the presence of Egypt before the Anglo-Saxon globe trotter had vulgarized it. This pueblo was a thousand years old—and to reach it was an exploration. Therefore, while the great Mississippi Valley was being overrun these simple folk lived apart.

They were on the maps of Arizona, but of this they had no knowledge and no care. Some of them were not even curious to see the white man who covered the mysterious land beyond the desert. The men of mystery in the tribe, the priests and the soothsayers, deeply resented the prying curiosity and the noisy impertinence of the occasional cowboy who rode across the desert to see some of their solemn rites with snakes and owls.

The white men grew in power just beyond the horizon line, but they asked no favors of him. They planted their corn in the sand where the floods ran, they guarded their hardy melons, and gathered their gnarled and rusty peaches year by year as contentedly as any people—chanting devout prayers and songs of thanksgiving to the deities that preside over the clouds and the fruitful earth.

They did not ask for the corrugated-iron roofs of the houses which an officious government built for them, nor for the little schoolhouse which the insistent missionary built at the foot of their mesa.

They were a gentle folk—small and round and brown of limb, peaceful and kindly. The men on their return from the fields at night habitually took their babes to their arms—and it was curious and beautiful to see them sitting thus on their housetops, waiting for supper—their crowing infants on their knees. Such action disturbed all preconceived notions of desert dwellers.

They had their own governors, their sages, their physicians. Births and deaths went on among them accompanied by the same joy and sorrow that visit other human beings in greener lands. They did not complain of their desert. They loved it, and when at dawn they looked down upon the sapphire mists which covered it like a sea, song sprang to their lips, and they rode forth to their toil, caroling like larks.

True, pestilences swept over them from time to time—and droughts afflicted them—but these they accepted as punishment for some devotional remission on their part and redoubled their zealous chants. They had no doubts, they knew their way of life was superior to that of their neighbors, the Tinné; and their traditions of the Spaniards who had visited them, centuries before, were not pleasant—they put a word of fervent thanks into their songs that "the men of iron" came no more.

But this new white man—this horseman who wore a wide hat—who sent pale-faced women into the desert to teach a new kind of song, and the worship of a new kind of deity—this restless keen-eyed, decisive *Americano* came in larger numbers year by year. He insisted that all Pueblan ways were wrong—only his were right.

Ultimately he built an Iron Khiva near the foot of the trail, and sent word among all the Pueblo peoples that they should come and view this house—and bring their children, and leave them to learn the white man's ways.

"We do not care to learn the white man's way," replied the head men of the village. "We have our own ways, which are suited to us and to our desert, ways we have come to love. We are afraid to change. Always we have lived in this manner on this same rock, in the midst of this sand. Always we have worn this fashion of garments—we did not ask you to come—we do not ask you to stay nor to teach our children. We are glad to welcome you as visitors—we do not want you as our masters."

"We have come to teach you a new religion," said the missionary.

"We do not need a new religion. Why should we change? Our religion is good. We understand it. Our fathers gave it to us. Yours is well for you—we do not ask you to change to ours. We are willing you should go your way—why do you insist on our accepting yours?"

Then the brows of the men in black coats grew very stern, and they said:

"If you do not do as we say and send your children to our Iron House to learn our religion, we will bring blue-coated warriors here to make you do so!"

Then the little brown people retreated to their rock and said: "The iron men of the olden time have come again in a new guise," and they were very sad, and deep in their cavelike temples in the rocks, they prayed and sang that this curse might pass by and leave them in peace once more.

Nevertheless, there were stout hearts among them, men who said: "Let us die in defense of our homes! If we depart from the ways of our fathers for fear of these fierce strangers—our gods will despise us."

These bold ones pushed deep into the inner rooms of their khivas, and uncovered broken spears, and war clubs long unused—and restrung their rude bows and sharpened their arrows, while the sad old sages sang mournful songs in the sacred temples under ground—and children ceasing their laughter crept about in coveys like scared quail—dreading they knew not what.

Then the white men withdrew, and for a time the Pueblans rejoiced. The peaceful life of their ancestors came back upon them. The men again rode singing to the purple plain at sunrise. The old women, groaning and muttering together, went down to the spring for water. The deft potters resumed their art—the girls in chatting, merry groups, plastered the houses or braided mats. The sound of the grinding of corn was heard in every dwelling.

But there were those who had been away across the plain and who had seen whence these disturbing invaders came—they were still dubious—they waited, saying: "We fear they will come again! They are like the snows of winter, bitter and not to be turned aside with words."

II

One day they came again—these fierce, implacable white men—preceded by warriors in blue, who rode big horses—horses ten times as large as a burro, and they were all agrin like wild cats, and they camped near the Iron Khiva, and the war chief sent word to all the men of the hill to assemble, for he intended to speak to them. "Your Little Father is here also, and wishes to see you."

All night this imperious summons was debated by the fathers, and at last it was agreed that six old men should go down—six gray grandsires—and hear what this war chief had to say.

"We can but die a few days before our time," they said. "If they carry us into the East to torture us—it will not be for long. Our old bones will soon fall apart."

So while all the villagers sat on their housetops to watch in silence and dread, the aged ones wrinkled, gray, and half blind, made their sad way down toward the peace grove in which the white lodges of the warriors glittered. With unfaltering steps led by the chief priest of the Antelope Clan, they approached and stood in silence before the war chief of the bluecoats who came to meet them. Speaking through a Tinné interpreter, he said:

"The Great Father, my chief, has sent me to tell you this. You must do as this man says," and he pointed at the man in black. "He is your teacher. He has come to gather your children into that Iron House and teach them the white man's ways. If you don't—if you make war—then I will go up against you with my warriors and my guns that go *boom, boom, boom*, a hundred times, and I will destroy you. These are the commands of my chief."

When the old men returned with this direful message, despair seized upon the people. "Evil times are again upon us," they cried. "Surely these are the iron men more terrible than before."

They debated voluminously all night long, and at last decided to fight—but in the early morning a terrible noise was heard below on the plain, and when they rushed to see—behold the warriors in blue were rushing to and fro on their horses, shouting, firing off their appalling weapons. It was plain they were doing a war dance out of wanton strength, and so terrible did they seem that the hearts of the small people became as wax. "We can do nothing against such men; they are demons; they hold the thunder in the palms of their hands. Let us submit; perhaps they will grow weary of the heat and sand and go away. Perhaps they will long for their wives and children and leave us. We will wait."

Others said: "Let us send our children—what will it matter? We can watch over them, they will be near us, and we can see that they do not forget our teachings. Our religion will not vanish out of their minds."

So the old men went again to the war chief, and, with bowed heads and trembling voices, said: "We yield. You are mighty in necromancy and we are poor and weak. Our children shall go to the Iron Khiva."

Then the war chief gave them his hand and smiled, and said: "I do not make war with pleasure. I am glad you have submitted to the commands of my great chief. Live in peace!"

III

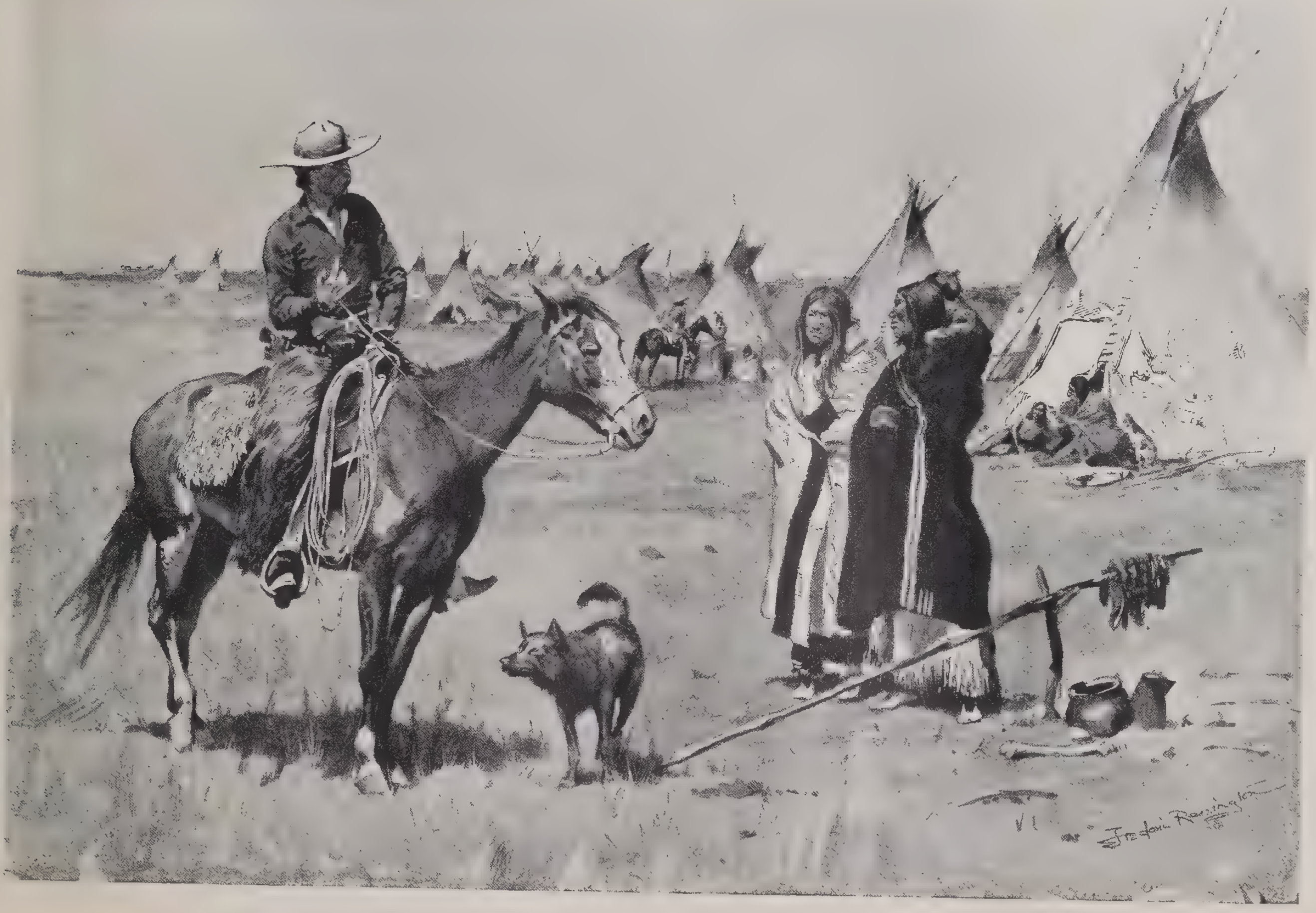
For two years the children went almost daily to the Iron Khiva, and they came to love one of those who taught them—a white woman with a gentle face—but the man in the black coat who told the children that the religion of their fathers was wicked and foolish—him they hated and bitterly despised. He was sour-faced and fearful of voice. He shouted so loud the children were scared—they had no breath to make reply when he addressed them.

But to even this creature they became accustomed, and the life of the village was not greatly disturbed. True, the children began to speak in a strange tongue and fell into foolish songs which did little harm—they were, in fact, amusing, and, besides, when the cattlemen came by and wished to buy baskets and blankets, these skilled children could speak their barbarous tongue—and once young Kopeli took his son who had mastered this hissing language, and went afar to trade, and brought back many things of value. He had been to the home of the Little Father, and the fort.

In short the Pueblans were getting reconciled to the Iron Khiva and the white people, and several years went by so peacefully, with so little change in their life and thought, that only the most far-seeing expressed fear of coming trouble—but one night the children came home in a panic—breathless and storming with excitement.

A stranger had arrived at the Iron House, accompanied by a tall old man who claimed authority over them—the man who lived in the big white man's town—and they had said to the teacher, "we want six children to take away with us into the East."

This was incredible to the people of the cliff, and they answered: "You were mistaken, you did not understand. They would not come to tear our children from our arms."

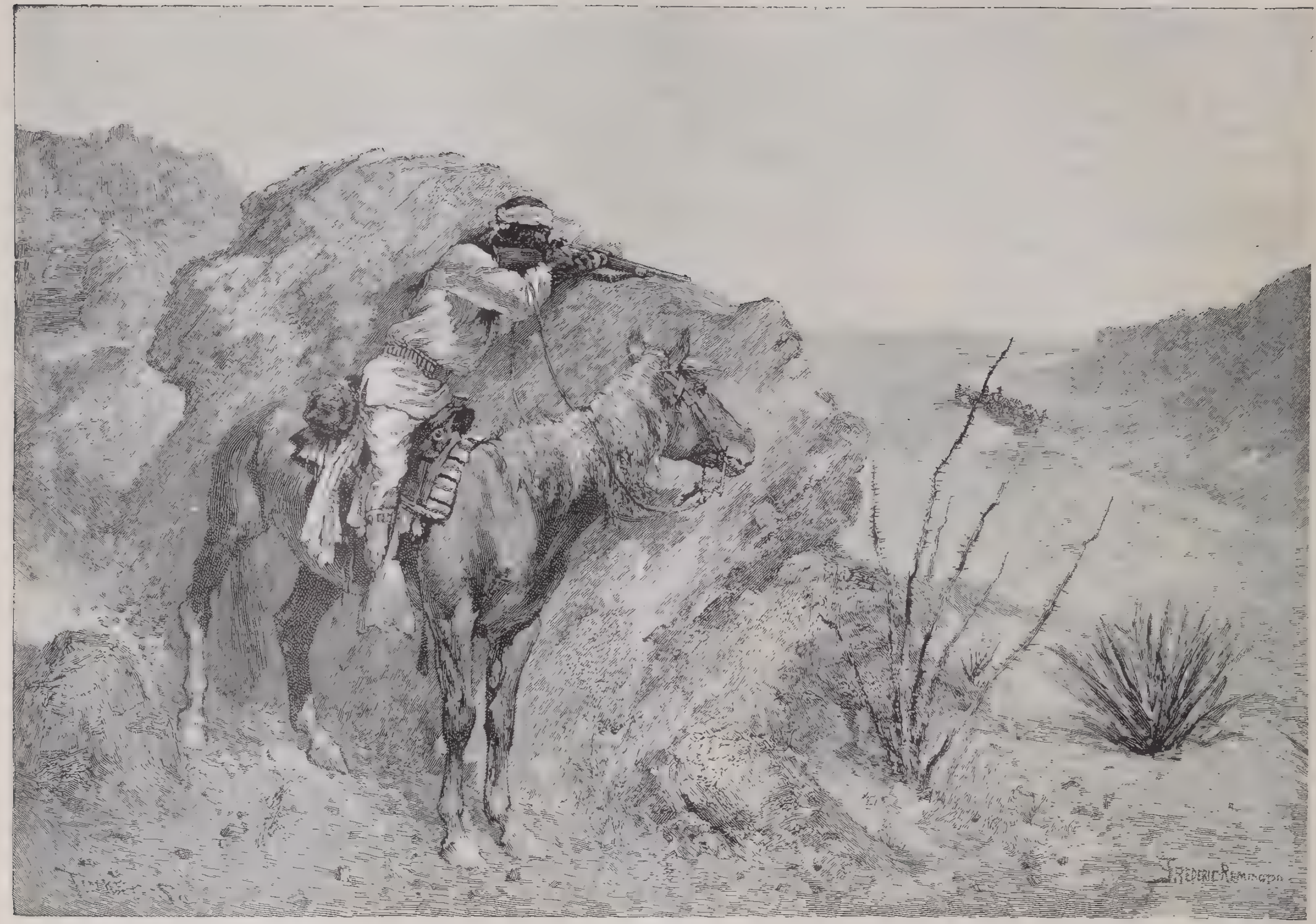


A Cow-puncher Visiting an Indian Village

Far in advance of settlers, in those early days when every man had to fight for his right of way, the American cow-puncher used to journey along the waste hundreds of miles of the then far Western country. Like a true soldier of fortune, he adventured with bold carelessness, ever ready for war, but not love; for in the Indian villages he visited there was no woman that such a man as he was could take to his heart.

Illustration from
THE EVOLUTION OF THE COW-PUNCHER
by Owen Wister

Originally published in
HARPER'S MAGAZINE, *September, 1895*



An Apache Indian

In the 'eighties the habitat of the Apaches was in the Sierra Madre Mountains in Arizona. When pursued the Apaches always took to the mountains. They were hideously cruel. The settlers entertained a perfect dread of these marauding bands, whose onslaughts were so sudden that they were never seen. When they struck, all that would be seen was the flash of the rifle, resting with secure aim over a pile of stones or a bowlder, behind which was the red-handed murderer.

Illustration from
SOME INDIAN RIDERS
by Colonel Theodore Ayrault Dodge, U.S.A.

Originally published in
HARPER'S MAGAZINE, *May, 1891*

But the little ones were shivering with fear and would not go back to the plain. They moaned and wept all night—and at sunrise the old men went down to the Iron House, and said:

"Our little ones came home last night, crying. They said you had threatened to carry them away into the East; what does this mean?"

Then the strange men said, "This is true. We want six of your children to take away to school. We will not hurt them. They will live in a big house, they will have warm clothing, they will want for nothing. We are your friends. We want to teach your children the ways of the white man."

Passionately the grandsires responded. "We do not want to hear of these things. Our children are happy here, their hearts will break if you take them away. We will not submit to this. We will fight and die together."

Then the old white man who had been speaking became furious. His voice was sharp and fierce. "If you don't give up the children I will take them. You are all fools—your religion is wicked, and you are not fit to teach your children. My religion, my God, is the only God that is true and righteous, and I will take your children in order that you may be taught the true path and become as white men."

Then the old men withdrew hurriedly, their lips set in a grim line. Their return—their report, froze every heart. It was true then—these merciless men of the East were planning to carry their children into captivity. Swiftly the word passed, the goats were driven into their corrals, the water bags were filled, the storehouses were replenished. "We will not go down to the plain. Our children shall go no more to the Iron House. If they take them, it will be when all our warriors are dead."

So it was that when the agent and the missionaries climbed the mesa path they came upon a barricade of rocks, and men with bows and war clubs grimly standing guard. They made little talk—

they merely said, "Go your ways, white men, and leave us alone. Go look to your own sons and daughters, and we will take care of ours. The world is wide to the East, go back to it."

The agent said, "If you do not send your children down to school I will call my warriors, and I will kill every man with a war club in his hand."

To this young Kopeli, the war chief, said: "We will die in defense of our home and our children. We were willing that our children should go down to the Iron Khiva—till now—now when you threaten to steal them and carry them afar into captivity where we can never see them again, we rebel. We will fight! Of what value is life without our children? Your great war chief will not ask this hard thing of us. If he does then he has our answer."

Then with dark faces the white men went away and sent a messenger across the desert, and three days later the sentinels of the highest roof saw the bluecoat warriors coming again. Raising a wild song, the war song of the clan, the cliff people hastily renewed their defenses. They pried great rocks from the ledges, and set them where they could be toppled on the heads of the invaders. They built the barricades higher. They burnished their arrows and ground their sickles. Every man and boy stood ready to fight and die in defense of their right to life, and liberty, and their rocky home.

IV

ONCE again the timid prevailed; they said: "See this terrible white man, his weapons are most murderous. He can sit where he is, in safety, and send his missiles against our unprotected babes. He is too great. Let us make our peace with him."

So at last, for a third time, the elders went down to talk with the conquerors, and said, "What can we do to make our peace with you?"

Then the tall, old man said, "If you will give us two of your brightest sons to go away into the East we will ask no more, but your other children must return to the Iron House each day as before."

The elders withdrew, and the news flew about the pueblo, and every mother looked at her handsomest son in sudden terror, and the men assembled in furious debate. The war party cried out with great bitterness of clamor, "Let us fight and die! We are tired of being chased like wolves." But at last up rose old Hozro, and said, "I have a son—you know him. He is a good son, and he has quick feet and a ready tongue. He is not a brawler. He is beloved of his teachers. Now, in order that we may be left in peace, I will give my son."

His short and passionate speech was received with expressions of astonishment as well as approval, for the boy Lelo was a model youth—and Hozro a proud father. "What will the mother say?" thought all the men who sat in the council.

Then gray old Supela, chief priest and sage, rose slowly, and said, "I have no son—but my son's son I have. Him I will dedicate, though he is a part of my heart. I will cut him away because I love peace and hate war. Because if the white man rages against us he will slaughter everybody."

While yet they were in discussion some listening boys crept away and scattered the word among the women and children. "Lelo and Sakoni are to be bound and cast among the white men."

There was wailing in the houses as though a plague had smitten them again—and the mothers of the lads made passionate protestations against the sacrifice of their sons—all to no purpose. The war chief came to tell them to make ready. "In the morning we must take the lads to their captors."

But when morning came they could not be found in their accustomed places, they had fled upon the desert to the West. Then, while the best trailers searched for their footprints, the fathers of the tribe went down and told the white chief. He said:

"I do not believe it, you are deceiving me."

"Come and see," said Hozro, and led the way round the mesa to the point where the trailers were slowly tracing the course of the fugitives.

"They are running," said young Klee. "They are badly scared."

"Perhaps they go to Oraibi," said one of the priests.

"We have sent runners to all the villages. No, they are heading for the great desert."

They followed them out beyond all hope of water—out into the desolate sand—where the sun flamed like a flood of fire and only the sparse skunk-weed grew—and at last sharp eyes detected two dark flecks on the side of a dune of yellow sand.

"There they are!" cried Klee, the trailer.

The stern old white man spurred his horse—the soldier chief did the same—but Klee outran them all. He topped the sand dune at a swift trot, but there halted and stood immovably gazing downward.

At last he came slowly down the slope and, meeting the white man, the agent, and the soldier, he said, with a sullen, accusing face, and with bitter scorn:

"There they are; go get them; my work is done!"

With wonder in their looks the pursuers rode to the top of the hill and stood for a moment looking; then the lean hand of old Hozro lifted and pointed to a little hollow. "There they lie—exhausted!"

But Klee turned and said, "They are not sleeping—they are dead! I feel it."

With a sudden hoarse cry the father plunged down the hill and fell above the body of his son.

When the white men came to him they perceived that the bodies of the boys lay in the dark stain of their own blood as in a blanket. They were dead, slain by their own hands.

Then old Hozro rose and said, "White man, this is your work. Go back to your home. Is not your thirst slaked? Drink up the blood of my son and go back to the white wolves who sent you. Leave us with our dead!"

In silence, with faces ashamed and heads hanging, the war chief and stern old white man rode back to their camp, leaving the heroic father and grandsire alone in the desert.

That night the great mesa was a hill of song, a place of lamentation. Hozro and Supela were like men stunned by a sudden blow. The old grandsire wept till his cry became a moan, but Hozro, as the greatness of his loss came to him, grew violent.

Mounting his horse, he rode fiercely up and down the streets. "Now, will you fight, cowards, prairie dogs? Send word to all the villages—assemble our warriors—no more talk now; let us battle!"

But when the morning came, behold the tents of the white soldiers were taken down, and when the elders went forth to parley, the soldier chief said:

"You need not send your children away. If they come down here to the Iron House that is enough. I am a just man; I will not fight you to take your children away. I go to see the Great Father and to plead against this man and his ways."

"And so our sons died not in vain," said Supela to Hozro, as they met on the mesa top.

"Aye, but they are dead!" said Hozro, fiercely. "The going of the white man will not bring them back."

And the stricken mothers sat with haggard faces and unseeing eyes; they took no comfort in the knowledge that the implacable white man had fled with the blue-coated warriors.

THE NEW MEDICINE HOUSE

THE NEW MEDICINE HOUSE

THE spring had been cold and wet, and pneumonia was common throughout the reservation on the Rosebud, and yet the trained nurse whom the government had sent out to preside over the little school hospital had little to do.

She was a grimly conscientious person, but not lovable. Men had not considered her in their home plans, and a tragic melancholy darkened her thin, plain visage, and loneliness added something hard and repellent to her devotional nature. She considered herself a martyr, one carried to far countries for the love of the gentle Galilean. She never complained vocably, but her stooping walk, her downcast eyes, and her oft-bitten lips revealed her discontent with great clearness to the red people, who interpret such signs by instinct.

"Why does she come here?" asked reflective old Tah-You, the sage of the camp on the Rosebud.

"She comes to do you good, to give your children medicine when they are sick," replied the subagent, speaking in signs.

"She is not happy. Send her away. We do not need her. I am medicine giver."

"I can't do that. Washington sent her. She must stay. She looks unhappy, but she is quite content. When your children are sick you should send them to her."

To this Tah-You made slow answer. "For many generations we have taken care of our own sick in our own way," said he. "I do not think Washington should require us to give up all our ways. You tell Washington that we are able to care for our sick."

It was only later that the agent found that the little hospital, the pride of his eyes, had been tabooed among the tribe from the very start. On the surface this did not appear. The children marched over, two and two, each morning, and took their prevention medicine with laughter, for it had a sweet taste, and the daily march was a ceremony. Their teacher took occasion to show them the clean white walls and the wide soft beds, and told them to tell their parents that this beautiful little house was for any one who was sick.

To this they all listened with that patient docility which is their most marked characteristic, and some of the old men came and looked at the "medicine house" and spoke with the "medicine woman," and while they did not show enthusiasm, they were not openly opposed.

All this gave way to a hidden, determined aversion after one of the employees had died in the place. The nurse, being sheathed in the boiler iron of her own superstitions, could not understand the change in the attitude of the red people. It was not her business to give way to or even to take into account their own feelings. If they were sick she insisted that the superintendent hale them forthwith to her rooms and bind them on her beds of painful neatness. The opposition of the old people she would put down with the bayonet if necessary.

A group of the old men came to the agent and said: "Friend, a white man has died in the medicine house. That is bad. Among us we do not let any one use the lodge in which one has died—we burn it and all that is connected with the dead one. There is something evil which comes from the clothing of one who is dead of a disease. We do not wish our children to enter this medicine house."

"Furthermore," said Tah-You, "there are many bottles standing about in the house, and they stink very strong—they make us sick even when we go in for a few moments. It is not good for our children to sleep there when they are ill.

"More than this," continued Tah-You, prompted by another, "the medicine woman drinks whisky in the night, and our children ought not to see that their medicine woman is a drunkard."

Slowly and painfully Mr. Williams explained that all the bedclothes were purified and the room made clean after a person died in it. Also that the smell of the bottles was not harmful. As to the medicine woman and her drinking, they were mistaken. She was taking some drink for her cough.

"We do not believe in keeping a house for people to die in," repeated Tah-You. "Spirits and things evil hover round such a place. They cry in the night and make a sick child worse. They are very lonely. It is better that they come back to the tepee when they are ill. The children are now frightened, and we want you to promise that when any of them fall sick you will not send them to this lonesome house which is death-tainted."

The face of the agent hardened. To this end he knew the talk would come. "Listen, friends. Washington is educating your children. He is feeding them. He has sent also a medicine man and a medicine woman to take care of you when you are ill. I have built a nice clean house for you to be sick in. When your children are sick they must go there. I will not consent to their returning to the tepee."

This was the usual and unavoidable end of every talk. Every wish of the red man was necessarily thwarted—for that is manifestly the way to civilize them. They rose silently, sadly, with the patient resignation to which they had schooled themselves, and passed out, leaving the agent with a sneaking, heart-burning sense of being woefully in the wrong.

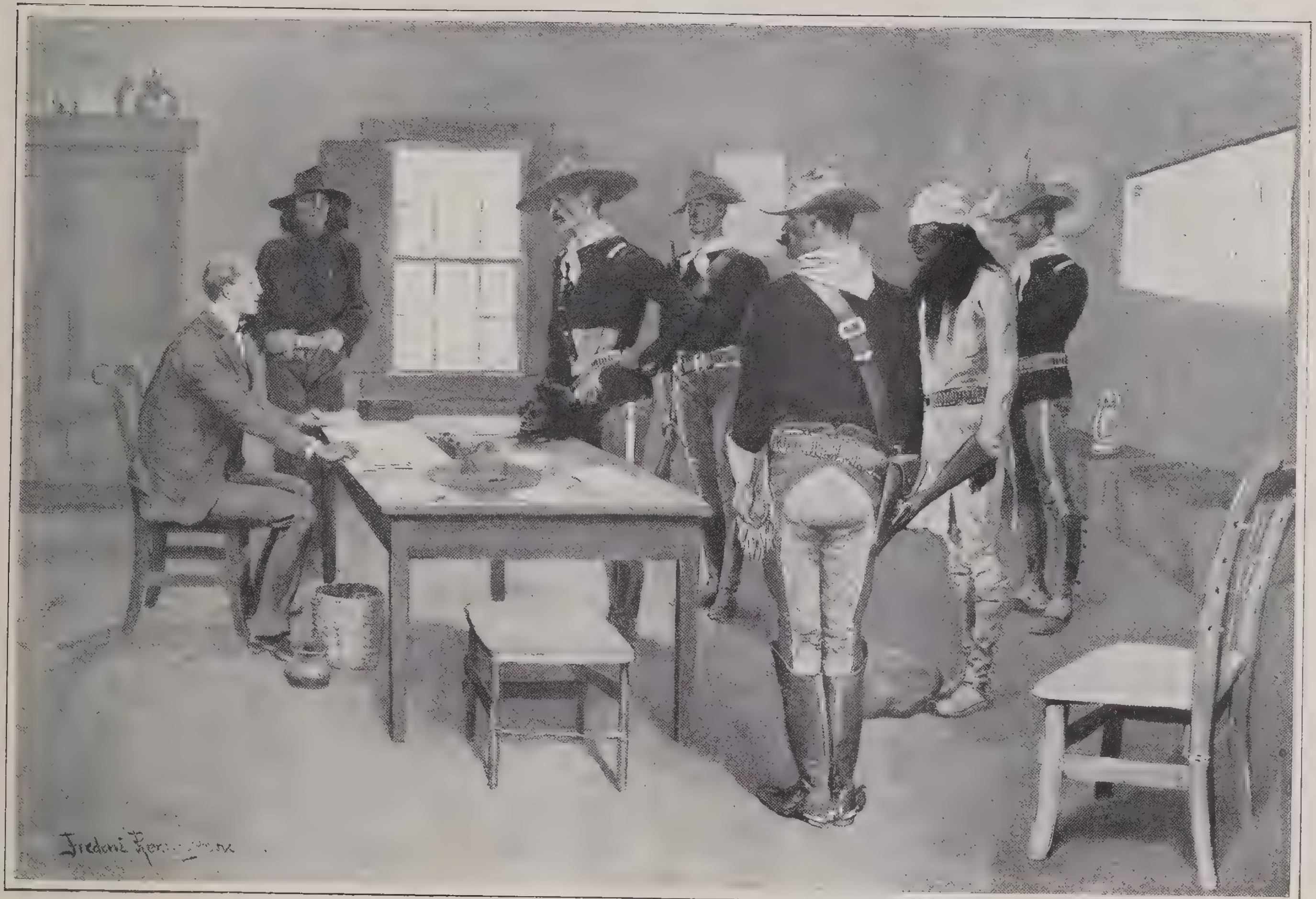
In the weeks that followed, the smug little hospital stood empty, for no sick one from the camp would so much as look toward its glass-paneled door. The children no longer laughed as they lined up for their physic. The nurse sat and read by the window, with no duties but those of caring for her own bed. She had the professed sympathy of all those who have keen noses for the superstitions of other people, but none whatever for their own. She thought "the government should force these Indians to come in and be treated."

And as for Tah-You, these people of a creed were agreed that he was the meanest Indian in the tribe, and it was his influence which stood in the way of the medicine woman's curative courses, and interfered with the plan to convert them into Christian citizens. "The power of these medicine men must be broken," said the Rev. Alonzo Jones.

Once in a while a child was made to stay overnight in the dread, sleek little rooms of the hospital, but each one escaped at the earliest moment. In one case, when the sick one chanced to be an orphan, she was made a shining decoy and coddled and fed on dainties fit for a daughter of millions, in order that her enthusiastic report of the currant jelly and chicken broth might soften the hearts of her companions toward the hard-glazed walls and echoing corridors of the little prison house. But it did not. She told of the smells, of the awful silence and loneliness, of the sour-faced nurse who did many most mysterious things in the deep of the night, and the other girls shuddered and laughed nervously and said, "When we are sick we will run away and go to camp." The opposition deepened and widened.

The struggle came when Robert, the first sergeant of the school, the captain of the baseball team, fell sick. He was a handsome, steady, good-humored boy of twenty, of fine physical development, and a good scholar. He spoke English readily and colloquially, and was a cheering example of what a reservation school can turn out. The superintendent trusted him implicitly, and found him indispensable in the government of the school and the management of the farm and garden, and the agent often invited him to his house to meet visitors.

Robert, after ploughing all one cold, rainy afternoon, took a griping chill and developed a cough which troubled him for some

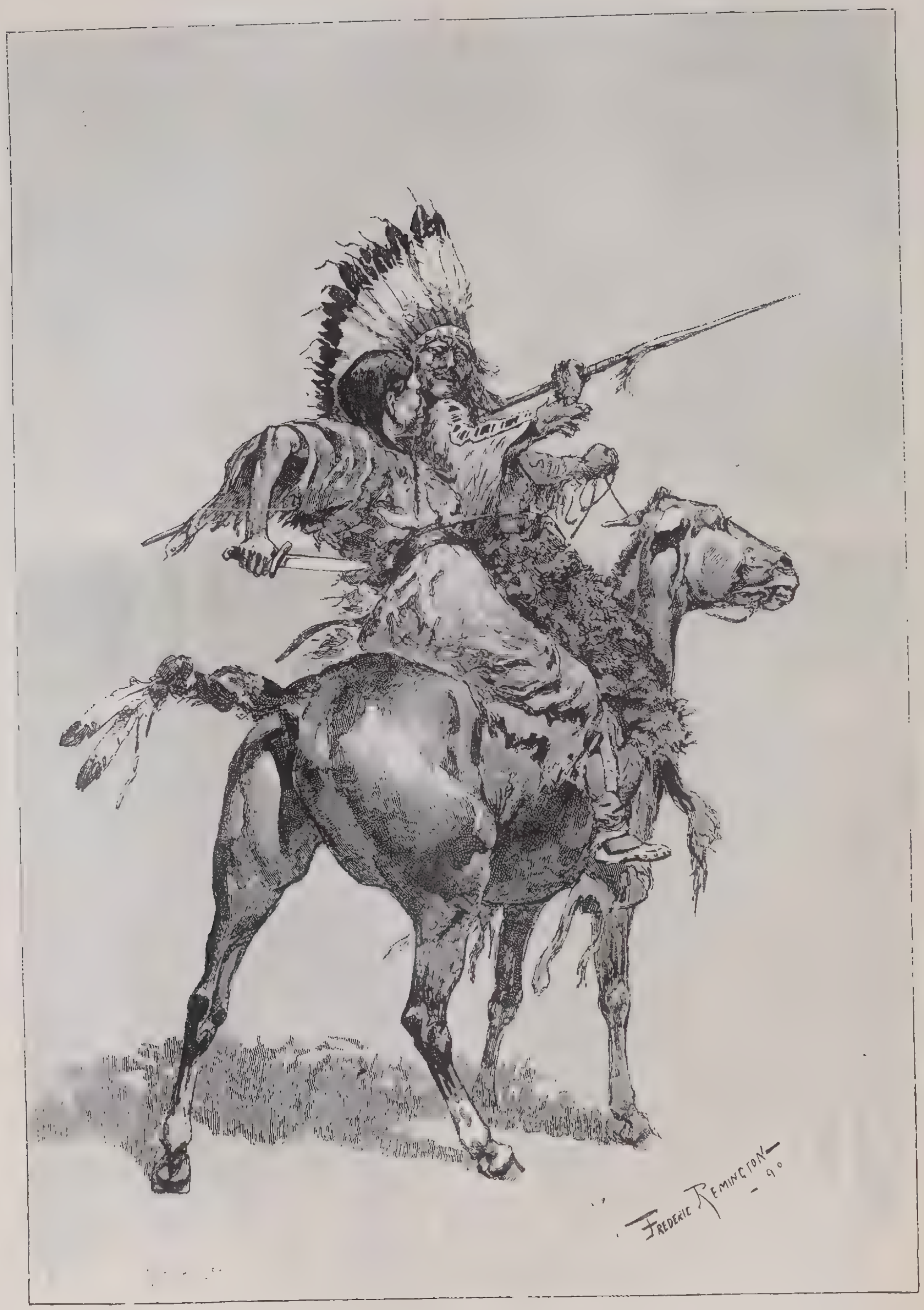


At an Apache Indian Agency

This incident occurred in the days of the so-called "Indian Ring," when the Interior Department used to appoint as Indian agents men whose sole object was to enrich themselves by stealing the property of their savage wards. As a result of their reckless operations there was constant friction between these agents and the men of the army.

Illustration from
NATCHEZ'S PASS
by Frederic Remington

Originally published in
HARPER'S MAGAZINE, *February, 1901*



The Adventure of Old Sun's Wife

When a mere maid, the chief of the Gros Ventres Indians kidnaped her and, binding her securely to himself, rode off for his own village. When within sight of their destination the girl stabbed him, killing him. This feat not only won her the right to wear three eagle feathers, but Old Sun, the rich and powerful chief of the North Blackfeet Indians of Canada, made her his wife.

Illustration from
CHARTERING A NATION
by Julian Ralph

Originally published in
Harper's Magazine, *December, 1891*

days. He said nothing about it, and kept on with his work when he should have been in bed, for he dreaded the hospital, and was careful to minimize all his bad symptoms, but one morning he found himself unable to rise, and the doctor pronounced him a very sick boy—"Another case of pneumonia," said he.

Robert was silent as they moved him across the road into the men's ward of the little hospital; but his eyes, bright with fever, seemed to plead for something, and when the agent bent down to ask him if he wanted anything, the boy whispered, "Stay with me."

"All right, Robert, I'll watch with you to-night. I must go now, but I'll come back at noon."

It was a long day for the sick boy, who watched and listened, giving little heed to the nurse who was tirelessly active in ministering to his needs. He knew just what was going on each minute. He listened for the assembly bell at seven o'clock. He could see the boys in their uniforms lining up in the halls. Now they were marching to chapel. They were singing the first song—he could hear them. Now they were listening to the little talk of the superintendent—and all was quiet.

At last they went whooping to their games in the play hour just before bedtime, and it seemed hard to lie there and hear them and be alone and forgotten. "The teachers will come to see me," he thought, "and some of the boys." But they did not come. It began to grow dark at last, and the taciturn nurse lit a smoking lamp and sat down to read. When she asked him a question it sounded like the snarl of a cat, but her hands were tender and deft. Oh, it was hard to be sick and lie still so long!

When the agent came in the boy said: "Major, tell my mother. Let her come. Tell her I'm very sick, Major!"

"All right, Robert. I'll take the first opportunity to send her word. But she's a long way off, you know. I hear she went to Tah-You's old camp. But I will watch with you, my boy. Go to sleep and rest."

The boy grew very much worse in the night, and in his temporary delirium he called piteously for his mother and in his native tongue, and the agent told one of the policemen to carry word to the mother, "Pawnee Woman," that her son was sick. "Say to her that we are doing all we can for him, and that he is in no danger," he added.

That day was a long day to Robert, a day that was filled with moments of delirium as a June day is filled with cloud shadows. Each hour carried him farther from the white man's religion and the white man's medicine—only his good agent comforted him; to him he clung with ever-weakening fingers. The agency doctor, earnest to the limits of his powers (you can't buy great learning at eight hundred dollars per year), drew the agent aside and said: "The boy is in for a siege, Major. His temperature is rising in spite of everything. He must be watched closely to-night."

"I'll look out for that," said Williams. Weary as he was, he watched again the second night, for the boy would not let him go, and his heart was very tender toward him.

The next morning as he sat in his little office he heard the swift soft thud of moccasined feet in the hall, and a timid knock. "Come!" he shouted, and before he could turn, a Cheyenne woman ran swiftly in. Her comely face was set in tragic lines of grief, and sobbing convulsively, while the tears flooded her cheeks. She laid one hand upon the agent's shoulder, and with the other she signed: "Father, my son is going to die. Your work and your lodge have killed him. Have pity!" As she signed she wailed heart-brokenly, "He will die."

"Dry your tears," he replied, "He is not going to die. Two nights I have watched with him. I have myself given him strong medicine. He is better."

She moaned as if all hope were gone. "No, no. He is very sick, father. He does not know me. His eyes are like those of a dead boy. Oh, have pity! Come with me. Come and aid him."

To comfort her the weary man went back to the hospital, and as they entered, the mother made a wild gesture of repulsion, and said to the nurse: "Go away, dog woman! You are killing my son."

In vain Williams tried to tell her how faithful the nurse had been. She would not listen.

"Father, let me take my son to the lodge. Then he will get well."

He shook his head. "No, that would not do. He would die on the way. Let him stay here till he is better. You and I will watch over him here. No harm will come then. See how nice and clean his bed is, how sheltered his room is. It will be cold and windy in camp; he will be made worse. Let him remain till he is able to stand. Then it will be safe to take him away."

By putting forth all his powers of persuasion he comforted and reassured the distracted mother, and she sat down in the hospital; but an understanding that she wanted to have Tah-You the medicine man visit the boy and breathe upon him and sing to him ran round the school and the agency, and the missionaries and the nurse were furious.

"The idea of that nasty old heathen coming into the hospital!" said the nurse to one of the teachers. "If he comes, I leave—that's all!"

The doctor laughed. "The old cuss might do him good. Who knows?"

The Reverend Jones pleaded with Williams: "Don't permit it. It will corrupt the whole school. Deep in their hearts they all believe in the old medicine man, and if you give in to them it will set them all back ten years. Don't let them take Robert to camp on any plea. All they want to do is to smoke and make gibberish over him."

To these impassioned appeals Williams could only say: "I can't order them not to do so. They are free citizens under our present law, and I have no absolute control over them. If they insist on taking Robert to camp, I can't stop them."

Mr. Jones went away with a bitter determination to make some kind of complaint against somebody, to something—he couldn't quite make up his mind to whom.

Then old Tah-You came, very grave and very gentle, and said: "Father, the Great Spirit in the beginning made both the white man and the red man. Once I thought we could not be friends and live on the same soil. I am old now and wise in things I once knew nothing of. I now see that the white man knows many good things—and I know also that the red man is mistaken about many other things. Therefore we should lay our medicines side by side, and when we have chosen the better, throw the worthless one away. I have come to put my curative charms and my lotions beside those of the white medicine man. I will learn of him, he will learn of me. This sick boy is my grandson. He is very ill. I ask you to let me go in to him, and look upon him, and smoke the sacred pipe, and breathe upon him, and heal him with strong decoction of roots."

To this Williams replied: "Tah-You, what you ask I cannot grant. This medicine house was built for the white man's doctor by people who do not believe as you do. Those who gave the money would be very angry at me if I let you enter the door."

The old man's face fell and his lips worked as he watched the signs made by the white chief.

"So be it," he replied as he rose. "The white man's heart is hard. His eyes are the eyes of a wolf. He gives only in his own way. He makes all men walk in his own road. He will kill my son and laugh."

Williams rose also. "Do not harden your heart to me, friend. I know that much of your medicine is good. I do not say you shall not treat the boy. To-morrow, if he is no better, you can take him to camp. I cannot prevent that, but if you do and he dies I am not to blame."

The old man's face grew tender. "I see now that you are our friend. I am content."

The Reverend Mr. Jones came down upon the agent again, and the nurse and the teachers (though they dared say nothing) looked bitter displeasure. It seemed that the props on which their sky rested, were tottering, but Williams calmly said: "To have the boy die in hospital would do us a great deal more harm than to have him treated by Tah-You. Were you ever young? Don't you remember what it meant to have your old grandmother come and give you boneset tea and sit by your bed? Robert is like any other boy; he longs for his old grandfather, and would be quieted and rested by a return to the tepee. I will not sacrifice the boy for the sake of your mission. I won't take any such responsibility."

"It will kill him to be moved," said the nurse.

"I'm not so sure of that. Anyhow and finally, these people, under the present ruling of the department, are citizens, and I have no authority to make them do this or that. I have given my consent to their plan—and that ends the matter."

Early the next morning the father and mother, together with the grandmother, tenderly folded Robert in a blanket and took him away to camp, and all day the missionaries could hear the sound of the medicine man's rattle, and his low chant as he strove to drive out the evil influences, and some of them were exceedingly bitter, and the chief of the big medicine house was very sad, for it seemed that his work was being undone.

Now it happened that Tah-You's camp stood in the bend of the deep little river, and the tepees were based in sweet-smelling grasses, and when the sick boy opened his eyes after his swoon, he caught the flicker of leaf shadows on the yellowed conical walls of his mother's lodge, and heard the mocking-bird's song in the oaks. The kind, wrinkled face of his grandfather, the medicine man, bent over him, and the loving hands of his mother were on his neck. He was at home again! His heart gave a throb of joy, and then his eyes closed, a sweet langour crept over him, an utter content, and he fell asleep with the humming song of Tah-You carrying him ever farther from the world of the white man's worry and unrest.

The following day, as Williams lifted the door flap and entered, Tah-You sat contentedly smoking. The mother, who was sewing on a moccasin, looked up with a happy smile on her face and said, "He is almost well, my son."

"I am glad," said Williams.

Tah-You blew a whiff from his pipe and said, with a spark of deep-seated humor in his glance:

"The white men are very clever, but there are some things which they do not know. You—you are half red man; that accounts for your good heart. You see my medicine is very strong."

Williams laughed and turned toward the boy who lay looking out at the dear world with big, unwavering eyes. "Robert, how are you?"

Slowly the boys lips shaped the whispered word, "Better."

"There is no place like home and mother when you're sick, Robert. Hurry up and get well. I need you."

As Williams was going, the mother rose and took his hand and cried out, poignantly: "You are good. You let me have my son. You have saved him from the cruel-hearted medicine woman. Do not let her make evil medicine upon us."

"I will not let any one hurt him. Be at peace."

Then the mother's face shone with a wonderful smile. She stood in silence with heaving breast as her white chieftain went out. "He is good," she said. "He is our brother."

To this, serene old Tah-You nodded: "He knows my medicine is very strong—for he is half red man."

RISING WOLF—GHOST DANCER

RISING WOLF—GHOST DANCER

HE sat in the shade of the lodge, smoking his pipe. His face was thin, keen, and very expressive. The clear brown of his skin was pleasant to see, and his hair, wavy from long confinement in braids, was glossy as a blackbird's wing. Around his neck he wore a yellow kerchief—yellow was his "medicine" color—and he held a soiled white robe about his loins. He was about fifty years of age, but seemed less than forty.

He studied me quizzically as I communicated to him my wish to hear the story of his life, and laughingly muttered some jocose remark to his pretty young wife, who sat near him on a blanket, busy at some needlework. The humorous look passed out of his face as he mused, the shadows lengthened on the hot, dry grass, and on the smooth slopes of the buttes the sun grew yellow.

After a long pause, he lifted his head and began to speak in a low and pleasant voice. He used no gestures, and his glance was like that of one who sees a small thing on a distant hill.

"I am well brought up," were his first words. "My father was chief medicine man[1] of his tribe, and one who knew all the stories of his people. I was his best-loved son, and he put me into the dances of the warriors when I was three years old. I carried one of his war-bonnet feathers in my hand, and was painted like the big warriors.

"When my father wished to give a horse to the Cut Throat or Burnt Thigh people who visited us and danced with us, he put into my hands the little stick which counted for a horse, and I walked across the circle by his side and handed the stick to our friend. Then my mother was proud of me, and I was glad to see her smile.

"My father made me the best bows, and my mother made pretty moccasins for me, covered with bright beads and the stained quills of the porcupine. I had ponies to ride, and a little tepee of my own in which to play I was chief.

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[1] In Indian use the word "medicine" should be understood to mean magic power. A medicine man may heal the sick, but a healer is not necessarily a medicine man. A medicine man is a seer, a yogi.

"When I was a little older I loved well to sit near my father and the old men and hear them tell stories of the days that were gone. My father's stories were to me the best of all, and the motions of his hands the most beautiful. I could sit all day to listen. Best of all I liked the stories of magic deeds.

"One day my father saw me holding my ear to the talk, and at night he said to me, 'My son, I see you are to be a medicine man. You are not to be a warrior. When you are older, I will teach you the secrets of my walk, and you shall follow in my path.'

"Thereafter I watched everything the medicine men did. I crept near, and listened to their words. I followed them with my eyes when they went aside to pray. Where magic was being done—there was I. At the dance I saw my father fling live squirrels from his empty hand. I saw him breathe smoke upon the body of a dead bird, and it awoke and ran to a wounded man and tore out the rotting flesh and cured him. I saw a mouse come to life in the same way. I saw the magic bladder move when no one touched it; and I saw a man buried and covered with a big stone too great for four men to lift, and I saw him come forth as if the stone were a blanket.

"I saw there were many ways to become a medicine man. One man went away on a high mountain, and there stood and cried all the day and all the night, saying:

"'O Great Spirit!
I am a poor man.
I want to be wise.
I want to be big medicine man.
Help me, Great Spirit!
I want to be honored among my people.
Help me get blankets, horses.
Help me raise my children.
Help me live long,
Honored of my people.'

"So he chanted many hours, without food or water, and it was cold also. At last he fell down in a sleep and dreamed. When he came home, he had medicine. A big bird had told him many secrets.

"Another went into a sweat house to purify himself. He stayed all night inside, crying to the Great Spirit. He, too, dreamed, but he did not tell his dreams.

"A third man went into his tepee on a hill near the camp, and there, with nothing to eat or drink, sat crying like the other two, and at last he slept, and in the night voices that were not of his mouth came in the tepee, and I, who listened unobserved, was afraid, and his women were afraid also. He soon became a great medicine man; and I went to my father, and I said:

"'Make me a medicine man like Spotted Elk.'

"He looked upon me and said:

"'My son, you are too young.'

"Nevertheless I insisted, and he promised that, when I became sixteen years of age, he would help me to become like Spotted Elk. This pleased me.

"As I grew older I put away in my memory all the stories my father knew of our people. I listened always when the old men talked. I watched the medicine men as they smoked to the Great Spirits of the world. I crept near, and heard them cry to the Great Spirit overhead and to the Dark One who lives below the earth. I listened all the time, and by listening I grew wise as an old man.

"I knew all the wonderful stories of the coyote and of the rattlesnake. I knew what the eagle said to his mate, and I knew the power of the great bear who sits erect like a man. I was a hunter, but I followed the game to learn its ways. In those days we were buffalo eaters. We did not eat fish, nor fowl, nor rabbits, nor the meat of bear. Our women pounded wild cherries and made cakes of them, and of that we ate sometimes, but always we lived upon buffalo meat, and we were well and strong, not as we are now.

"I learned to make my own bows and also to make moccasins, though that was women's work, and I did not sew beads or paint porcupine quills. I wanted to know all things—to tan hides, to draw pictures—all things.

"By and by time came when I was to become a medicine man. My father took me to Spotted Elk, the greatest of all medicine men, he that could make birds from lumps of meat and mice from acorns.

"To him my father said: 'My son wishes to be great medicine man. Because you are old and wise I bring him to you. Help me to give him wisdom.'

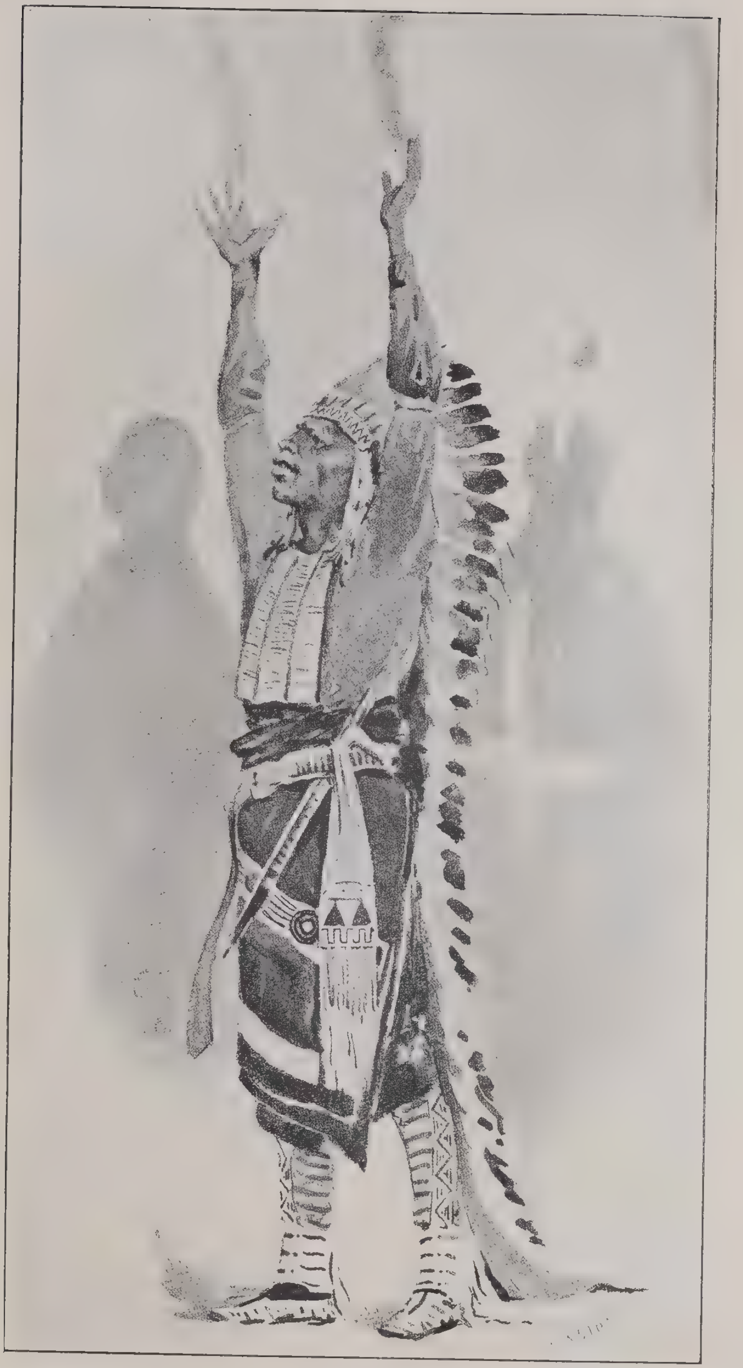
"Then they took me to a tepee on a hill far from the camp, and there they sat down with me and sang the old, old songs of our tribe. They took food, and offered it to the Great Spirits who lived in the six directions, beginning at the southeast. Then they smoked, always beginning at the southeast. This they taught me to do, and to chant a prayer to each. Then they closed the tepee, and left me alone.

"All night I cried to the Great Spirits:

"'Hear me—oh, hear me!
You are close beside me.
You are here in the tepee.
Hear me, for I am poor and weak.
I wish to be great medicine man.
I need horses, blankets. I am a boy.
I wish to be great and rich.
Hear me—oh, hear me!'

"All night, all next day I cried. I grew hungry and cold by and by. I fell asleep; then came to me in my sleep a fox, and he opened his mouth, and talked to me. He told me to put weasel skin full of medicine, and wear fox skin on my head, and that would make me big medicine. Then he went away, and I woke up.

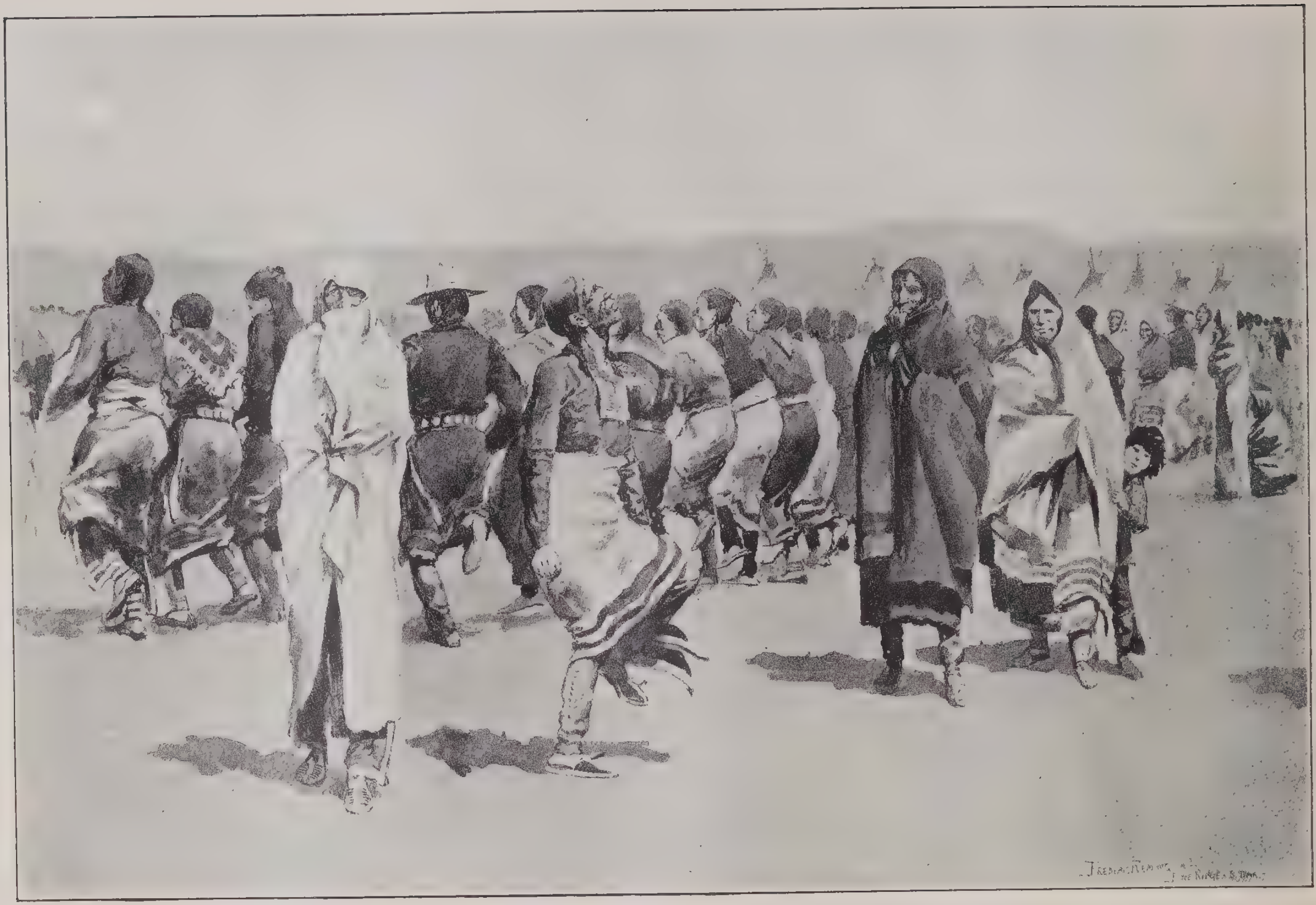
"I was very hungry, and I opened the tepee and came out, and it was sunrise. My father was sleeping on the ground, and when I touched him, he woke quickly and said:



The Medicine Man's Signal

Illustration from
THE SIOUX OUTBREAK IN SOUTH DAKOTA
by Frederic Remington

Originally published in
HARPER'S WEEKLY, *January 24, 1891*



The Ghost Dance by the Ogallala Sioux
at Pine Ridge Agency, Dakota,
December, 1890

Illustration from
THE NEW INDIAN MESSIAH
by Lieutenant Marion P. Maus, U.S.A.

Originally published in
HARPER'S WEEKLY, *December 6, 1890*

"'My son, I am glad to see you. I heard voices that were not yours calling in the tepee, and I was afraid.'

"'All is well,' I said. 'Give me food.'

"When I was fed, I took my bow and arrow and went forth to kill a weasel. When I was alone, I sat down and prayed to the Great Spirits of the six world directions, and smoked, beginning at the southeast, and a voice came in my ear which said, "I will lead you.' Soon I came upon a large, sleeping weasel; he was white all over as snow, though it was yet fall. Him I killed and skinned, and stretched the pelt on a flat stick to make a pouch. Then I sought the medicine to go in it. What that was I will not tell, but at last it was filled, and then I slew a big red fox, and out of his fur I made my cap.

"Each night I went into my tepee alone to smoke and chant, and each night strange birds and animals came to me and talked and taught me much wisdom. Then came voices of my ancestors, and taught me how to cure the sick and how to charm the buffalo and the elk. Then I began to help my father to heal the sick people, and I became honored among my companions; and when I caught a maid on her way to the spring, she did not struggle; she was glad to talk with me, for I had a fine tepee and six horses and many blankets.

"I grew skillful. I could do many things white people never see. I could be buried deep in the ground, while a mighty stone which six men alone could lift was rolled upon me. Then in the darkness, when I cried to the Great Spirits, they came swiftly and put their hands to the stone and threw it far away, and I rose and walked forth, and the people wondered. I cured many people by the healing of my hands, and by great magic like this: I had a dried mouse, and once when a man came to be stiff and cold with a hole in his side, I said, 'Put him before me.'

"When they did as I bid, I took the mouse and put it before the man who was dead, and I blew smoke upon the mouse and said: 'Great Spirits, help me to do this great magic.' Then the mouse came to life, and ran to the dead man and put his beak in the hole, and pulled out the bad flesh, and the wound closed up and the man rose.

"These wonderful things I did, and I became rich. I had a fine, large tepee and many horses and skins and blankets. People said: 'See, there goes Rising Wolf. He is young, but he has many horses.' Therefore, I came to be called 'Many Horses'; but I had only one wife, Sailing Hawk. I cared only for her."

The chief's handsome face had long since become grave and rapt. Now it suddenly grew grim. His little wife moved uneasily in her seat by his side, and he looked at her with a strange glance. Between them had crept the shadow of Sailing Hawk's death.

"One day while I sat with Sailing Hawk in my tepee, a big, black cloud came flying from the west like an eagle, and out of it the red fire stabbed and killed my wife and set my tepee on fire. My heart was like ice when I rose and saw my Sailing Hawk dead. I seized my gun. I fired many times into the cloud. I screamed at it in rage. My eyes were hot. I was crazy.—At last I went away, but my wife was dead, and my heart empty and like ashes. I did not eat for many days, and I cared no more for the Great Spirits. I prayed no more. I could not smoke, but I sat all night by the place where my Sailing Hawk lay, and no man dared come to me. My heart was very angry toward everybody and all things. I could not see the end of my trail. All was black before me.

"My people at this time were living on their own lands. The big fight with 'Long Hair' had passed away, and we were living at peace once more; but the buffalo were passing also, and we feared and wondered.

"Then the white man came with his soldiers, and made a corral here in the hot, dry country, and drove us therein, and said, 'If you go outside we will shoot you.' Soon we became poor. We had then no buffalo at all. We were fed poor beef, and had to wear white men's clothes which did not fit. We could not go to hunt in the mountains, and the land was waterless and very hot in summer, and we froze in winter. Then there were many sick, but the white men sent a doctor, and he laughed at me, and ordered me not to go near the sick ones. This made my heart black and sorrowful, for the white man gave strange white powders that were very bitter in the mouth, and the people died thereafter.

"But many times when he had gone I went in and made strong magic and cured the sick, and he thought it was his white powders. Nevertheless, more and more of my people came to believe in the white man, and so I grew very poor, and was forced to get rations like the rest. It was a black time for me.

"One night there came into our midst a Snake messenger with a big tale. 'Away in the west,' he said to us in sign talk, 'a wonderful man has come. He speaks all languages, and he is the friend of all red men. He is white, but not like other white men. He has been nailed to a tree by the whites. I saw the holes in his hands. He teaches a new dance, which is to gather all the Indians together in council. He wants a few head men of all tribes to meet him where the big mountains are, in the place where the lake is surrounded by pictured rocks. There he will teach us how to make mighty magic and drive away the white man and bring back the buffalo.'

"All that he told us we pondered long, and I said: 'It is well, I will go to see this man. I will learn his dance.'

"All this was unknown to the agent, and at last, when the time came, four of us set forth at night on our long journey. On the third day two Snake chiefs and four Burnt Thighs joined us, then four Cut Throat people, and we all journeyed in peace. At last we came to the lake by the pictured rocks where the three snow mountains are.

"There were many Indians there. The Big Bellies were there from the north; and the Blackfeet, and the Magpies, and the Weavers, and the People-of-the-south-who-run-round-the-rocks, and the Black-people-of-the-mountains all were there. We had council, and we talked in signs, and we all began to ask, 'Where is the Great Helper?' A day passed, and he did not come; but one night when we sat in council over his teachings, he suddenly stepped inside the circle. He was a dark man, but not so dark as we were. He had long hair on his chin, and long, brown head-hair, parted in the middle. I looked for the wounds on his wrists; I could not see any. He moved like a big chief, tall and swift. He could speak all tongues. He spoke Dakota, and many understood. I could understand the language of the Cut Throat people, and this is what he said:

"'My people, before the white man came you were happy. You had many buffalo to eat and tall grass for your ponies. You could come and go like the wind. When it was cold, you could go into the valleys to the south, where the healing springs are; and when it grew warm, you could return to the mountains in the north. The white man came. He dug the bones of our mother, the earth. He tore her bosom with steel. He built big trails and put iron horses on them. He fought you and beat you, and put you in barren places where a horned toad would die. He said you must stay there; you must not hunt in the mountains.

"'Then he breathed his poison upon the buffalo, and they disappeared. They vanished into the earth. One day they covered the hills, the next nothing but their bones remained. Would you remove the white man? Would you have the buffalo come back? Listen, and I will tell you how to make great magic. I will teach you a mystic dance, and then let everybody go home and dance. When the grass is green, the change will come. Let everybody dance four days in succession, and on the fourth day the white man will disappear and the buffalo come back; our dead will return with the buffalo.

"'The earth is old. It will be renewed. The new and happy world will slide above the old as the right hand covers the left.

"'You have forgotten the ways of the fathers; therefore great distress is upon you. You must throw away all that the white man has brought you. Return to the dress of the fathers. You must use the sacred colors, red and white, and the sacred grass, and in the spring, when the willows are green, the change will come.

"'Do no harm to any one. Do not fight each other. Live in peace. Do not tell lies. When your loved ones die, do not weep, nor burn their tepees, nor cut your arms, nor kill horses, for you will see the dead again.'

"His words made my heart glad and warm in my breast. I thought of the bright days when I was a boy and the white man was far away, when the buffalo were like sagebrush on the plains—there were so many. I rose up. I went toward him. I bowed my head, and I said:

"'Oh, father, teach us the dance!' and all the people sitting round said, 'Good! teach us the dance!'

"Then he taught us the song and the dance which white people call 'the ghost dance,' and we danced all together, and while we danced near him he sat with bowed head. No one dared to speak to him. The firelight shone on him. Suddenly he disappeared. No one saw him go. Then we were sorrowful, for we wished him to remain with us. It came into my heart to make a talk; so I rose, and said:

"'Friends, let us now go home. Our father has given us the mighty magic dance. Let us go home and teach all our people, and dance the four days, so that the white man may go and the buffalo come back. All our fathers will come back. The old men will be made young. The blind will see again. We will all be happy once more.'

"This seemed good to them, and we all smoked the pipe and shook hands and took our separate trails. The Blackfeet went north, the People-that-click-with-their-tongues went west, and the Magpies, the Cut Throats, and the Snakes started together to the east. The Burnt Thighs kept on, while the Magpies and the Cut Throats turned to the northeast.

"At last we reached home, and I called a big dance, and at the dance I told the people what I had seen, and they were very glad. 'Teach us the dance,' they cried to me.

"'Be patient,' I said. 'Wait till all the other people get home. When the grass is green and the moon is round, then we will dance, and all the red people will dance at the same time; then will the white man surely fade away, and the buffalo come up out of the earth where he is hid and roam the sod once more.'

"Then they did as I bid, and when the moon was round as a shield, we beat the drum and called the people to dance.

"Then the white man became much excited. He called for more soldiers everywhere to stop the dance, so I heard afterward. But the people paid no attention, for was not the white man poor and weak by the magic of the dance?

"Then we built five fires, one to each world direction and one in the center. We put on our best dress. We painted our faces and bodies in memory of our forefathers, who were mighty warriors and hunters. We carried bows and arrows and tomahawk and war clubs in memory of the days before the white man's weapons. Our best singers knelt around the drum, and the women sat near to help them sing. When the drum began to beat, our hearts were very glad. There were Magpies and Cut Throats among us, but we were all friends. We danced between the fires, and as we danced the drummers sang the mystic song:

"Father, have pity on us.
We are crying for thirst—
All is gone!
We have nothing to eat,
Our Father, we are poor—
We are very poor.
The buffalo are gone,
They are all gone.
Take pity on us, O Father!
We are dancing as you wish,
Because you commanded us.
We dance hard—
We dance long.
Have pity!

"The agent came to see us dance, but we did not care. He was a good man, and we felt sorry for him, for he must also vanish with the other white people. He listened to our crying, and looked long, and his interpreter told him we prayed to the Great Spirits to destroy the white man and bring back the buffalo. Then he called me with his hand, and because he was a good man I went to him. He asked me what the dance meant, and I told him, and he said, 'It must stop.' 'I cannot stop it,' I said. 'The Great Spirits have said it. It must go on.'

"He smiled, and went away, and we danced. He came again on the third day, and always he laughed. He said: 'Go on. You are big fools. You will see the buffalo will never come back, and the white man is too strong to be swept away. Dance till the fourth day, dance hard, but I shall watch you.'

"On the fourth night, while we danced, soldiers came riding down the hills, and their chiefs, in shining white hats, came to watch us. All night we prayed and danced. We prayed in our songs.

"Great Spirit, help us.
You are close by in the dark.
Hear us and help us.
Take away the white man.
Send back the buffalo.
We are poor and weak.
We can do nothing alone.
Help us to be as we once were,
Happy hunters of buffalo.

"But the agent smiled, and the soldiers of the white chiefs sat not far off, their guns in their hands, and the moon passed by, and the east grew light, and we were very weary, and my heart was heavy. I looked to see the red come in the east. 'When the sun looks over the hills, then it will be,' I said to my friends. 'The white man will become as smoke. The wind will sweep him away.'

"As the sun came near we all danced hard. My voice was almost gone. My feet were numb, my legs were weak, but my heart was big.

"'Oh, help us, Great Spirits,' we cried in despair.

"'Father, the morning star,
Father, the morning star,
Look on us!
Look on us, for we have danced till dawn;
Look on us, for we have danced until daylight.

Take pity on us,
O Father, the morning star!
Show us the road—
Our eyes are dark.

Show us our dead ones.
We cry and hold fast to you,
O morning star.
We hold out our hands to you and cry.
Help us, O Father!
We have sung till morning
The resounding song.'

"'But the sun came up, the soldiers fired a big gun, and the soldier chiefs laughed. Then the agent called to me,

"'Your Great Spirit can do nothing. Your Messiah lied.'

"Then I covered my head with my blanket and ran far away, and I fell down on the top of the high hill. I lay there a long time, thinking of the white man's laugh. The wind whistled a sad song in the grass. My heart burned, and my breath came hard.

"'Maybe he was right. Maybe the messenger was two-tongued and deceived us that the white man might laugh at us.'

"All day I lay there with my head covered. I did not want to see the light of the sun. I heard the drum stop and the singing die away. Night came, and then on the hills I heard the wailing of my people. Their hearts were gone. Their bones were weary.

"When I rose, it was morning. I flung off my blanket, and looked down on the valley where the tepees of the white soldiers stood. I heard their drums and their music. I had made up my mind. The white man's trail was wide and dusty by reason of many feet passing thereon, but it was long. The trail of my people was ended.

"I said, 'I will follow the white man's trail. I will make him my friend, but I will not bend my neck to his burdens. I will be cunning as the coyote. I will ask him to help me to understand his ways, and then I will prepare the way for my children. Maybe they will outrun the white man in his own shoes. Anyhow, there are but two ways. One leads to hunger and death, the other leads where the poor white man lives. Beyond is the happy hunting ground, where the white man cannot go.'"

THE RIVER'S WARNING

THE RIVER'S WARNING

WE were visiting the camp of Big Elk on the Washeetay and were lounging in the tepee of the chief himself as the sun went down. All about us could be heard the laughter of the children and the low hum of women talking over their work. Dogs and babies struggled together on the sod, groups of old men were telling stories and the savory smell of new-baked bread was in the air.

The Indian is a social being and naturally dependent upon his fellows. He has no newspapers, no posters, no handbills. His news comes by word of mouth, therefore the "taciturn red man" does not exist. They are often superb talkers, dramatic, fluent, humorous. Laughter abounds in a camp. The men joke, tell stories with the point against themselves, ridicule those who boast and pass easily from the humorous to the very grave and mysterious in their faith. It is this loquacity, so necessary to the tribe, which makes it so hard for a red man to keep a secret.

In short, a camp of Indians is not so very unlike a country village where nothing but the local paper is read and where gossip is the surest way of finding out how the world is wagging. There are in both villages the same group of old men with stories of the past, of the war time, to whom the young men listen with ill-concealed impatience. When a stranger comes to town all the story tellers rejoice and gird up their loins afresh. It is always therefore in the character of the eager listener that I visit a camp of red people.

Big Elk was not an old man, not yet sixty, but he was a story teller to whom everybody listened, for he had been an adventurous youth, impulsive and reckless, yet generous and kindly. He was a handsome old fellow natively, but he wore his cheap trousers so slouchily and his hat was so broken that at a distance in the daytime he resembled a tramp. That night as he sat bareheaded in his tepee with his blanket drawn around his loins, he was admirable. His head was large, and not unlike the pictures of Ben Franklin.

"You see, in those days," he explained, "in the war time with the game robbers, every boy was brought up to hate the white man who came into our land to kill off our buffalo. We heard that these men killed for money like the soldiers who came to fight us, and that made our fathers despise them. I have heard that the white boys were taught to hate us in the same way, and so when we met we fought. The white man considered us a new kind of big game to hunt and we considered him a wolf paid to rob and kill us. Those were dark days.

"I was about twenty-two, it may be, when the old man agent first came to the east bank of the Canadian, and there sat down. My father went to see him, I remember, and came back laughing. He said, 'He is a thin old man and can take his teeth out in pieces and put them back,' and this amused us all very much. To this day, as you know, that is the sign for an agent among us—to take out the upper teeth.

"We did not care for the agent at that time for we had plenty of buffalo meat and skins. Some of the camp went over and drew rations, it is true, but others did not go. I pretended to be very indifferent, but I was crazy to go, for I had never seen a white man's house and had never stood close to any white man. I heard the others tell of a great many wonderful things over there—and they said there were white women and children also.

I was ambitious to do a great deed in those days and had made myself the leader of some fourteen reckless young warriors like myself. I sat around and smoked in tepee, and one night I said, 'Brothers, let us go to the agency and steal the horses.'

"This made each one of them spring to his feet. 'Good! Good!' they said. 'Lead us. We will follow. That is worth doing.'

"'The white men are few and cowardly,' I said. 'We can dash in and run off the horses, and then I think the old men will no longer call us boys. They will sing of us in their songs. We shall be counted in the council thereafter.'

"They were all eager to go and that night we slipped out of camp and saddled and rode away across the prairie, which was fetlock deep in grass. Just the time for a raid. I felt like a big chief as I led my band in silence through the night. My bosom swelled with pride like a turkey cock and my heart was fierce.

"We came in sight of the white man's village next day about noon, and veering a little to the north, I led my band into camp some miles above the agency. Here I made a talk to my band and said: 'Now you remain here and I will go alone and spy out the enemy and count his warriors and make plans for the battle. You can rest and grow strong while I am gone.'"

Big Elk's eyes twinkled as he resumed. "I thought I was a brave lad to do this thing and I rode away trying to look unconcerned. I was very curious to see the agency. I was like a coyote who comes into the camp to spy out the meat racks." This remark caused a ripple of laughter, which Big Elk ignored. "As I forded the river I glanced right and left, counting the wooden tepees" (he made a sign of the roof), "and I found them not so many as I had heard. As I rode up the bank I passed near a white woman and I looked at her with sharp eyes. I had heard that all white women looked white and sicklike. This I found was true. This woman had yellow hair and was thin and pale. She was not afraid of me—she did not seem to notice me and that surprised me.

"Then I passed by a big wooden tepee which was very dirty and smoky. I could see a man, all over black, who was pounding at something. He made a sound, *clank, clank, clunk-clank.* I stood at the door and looked in. It was all very wonderful. There were horses in there and this black man was putting iron moccasins on the horses' feet.

"An Arapahoe stood there and I said in signs, 'What do they do that for?'

He replied, 'So that the horses can go over rocks without wearing off their hoofs.'

"That seemed to me a fine thing to do and I wanted my pony fixed that way. I asked where the agent was, and he pointed toward a tall pole on which fluttered a piece of red and white and blue cloth. I rode that way. There were some Cheyennes at the door, who asked me who I was and where I came from. I told them any old kind of story and said, 'Where is the agent?'

"They showed me a door and I went in. I had never been in a white man's tepee before and I noticed that the walls were strong and the door had iron on it. 'Ho!' I said, 'This looks like a trap. Easy to go in, hard to get out. I guess I will be very peaceful while I am in here.'

"The agent was a little old man—I could have broken his back with a club as he sat with his back toward me. He paid no attention till a half-breed came up to me and said, 'What do you want?'

"'I want to see the agent.'

"'There he is; look at him,' and he laughed.

"The agent turned around and held out his hand. 'How, how!' he said. 'What is your name?'

"His face was very kind, and I went to him and took his hand. His tongue I could not understand, but the half-breed helped me. We talked. I made up a story. 'I have heard you give away things to the Cheyennes,' I said; 'therefore I have come for my share.'

"'We give to good red people,' he said. Then he talked sweetly to me. 'My people are Quakers,' he said. 'We have visions like the red people—but we never go to war. Therefore has the Great Soldier, the Great Father at Washington, put me here. He does not want his children to fight. You are all brothers with different ways of life. I am here to help your people,' he said, 'and you must not go to war any more.'

"All that he said to me was good—it took all the fire and bitterness out of my heart and I shook hands and went away with my head bowed in thought. He was as kind as my own father.

"I had never seen such white people before; they were all kind. They fed me; they talked friendly with me. Not one was making a weapon. All were preparing to till the soil. They were kind to the beasts, and all the old Cheyennes I met said, 'We must do as this good old man says.'

I rode home very slowly. I strutted no more. The stuffing was gone out of my chest. I dreaded to come back into my camp where my warriors were waiting for me. I spread my blanket and sat down without speaking, and though they were all curious to hear, they waited, for I smoked a pipe in sign of thought. At last I struck the ashes from my pipe and rose and said: 'Listen, brothers I shall not go to war against the agency.'

"They were all astonishment at this and some were instantly angry. 'Why not? What has changed your plan so suddenly?'

"'I have seen the agent; he is a good old man. Every one was pleasant to me. I have never seen this kind of white man. No one was thinking of war. They are all waiting to help the Cheyennes. Therefore my heart is changed—I will not go out against them.'

"My band was in a turmoil. One by one they cried out: 'You are a girl, a coyote with the heart of a sparrow.' Crow Kill made a long speech: 'This is strange business. You talk us into making you chief; you lead us a long hard ride and now we are without meat, while you, having your belly full of sweet food and a few presents in your hand, want to quit and run home crying like a papoose.'"

The old story teller was pitilessly dramatic in reciting the flood of ridicule and abuse poured out upon his head.

"Well, at last I said: 'Be silent! Perhaps you are right. Perhaps they deceived me. I will go again to-morrow and I will search closely into hidden things. Be patient until I have studied the ground once more.'

"As I thought of it all that night I came to feel again a great rage—I began to say: 'You are a fool. You have been blinded.' I slept uneasily that night, but I was awake early and rode away to the agency. I remained all day among them. I talked with all the Cheyennes and in signs I conversed with the Arapahoe—all said the same thing—'The agent does not lie. He is a good man.' Nevertheless, I looked the ground all over and at night I rode slowly back to the camp.

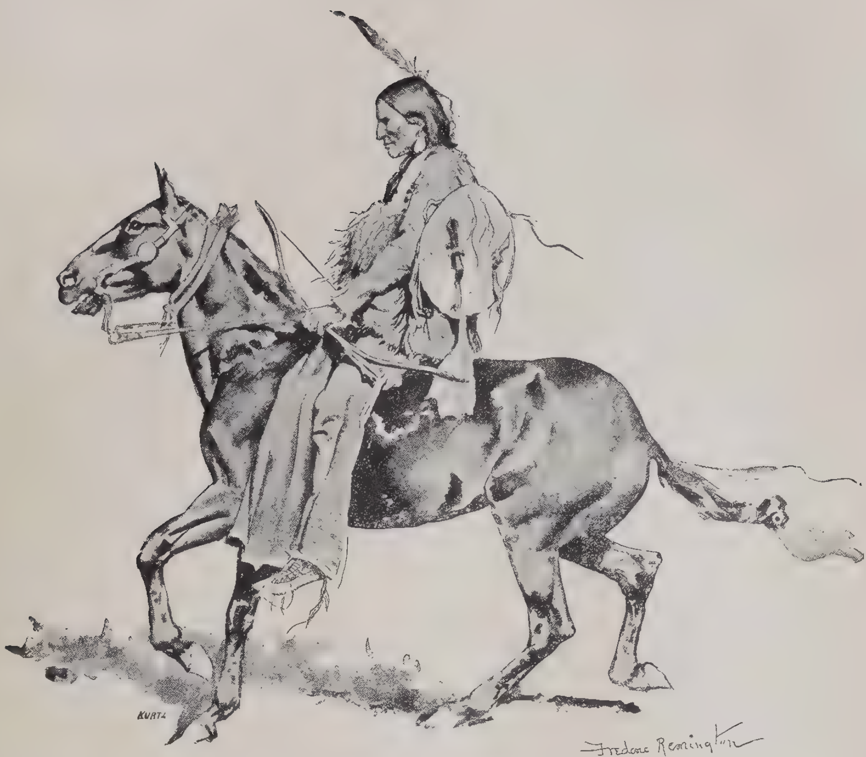
"Again I said, 'I will not go to war against these people,' and again my warriors cried out against me. They were angrier than before. They called me a coward. 'We will go on without you. You are fitted only to carry a papoose and stir the meat in a pot,' they said.

"This filled me with wrath and I rose and said: 'You call me a woman! Who of you can show more skill in the trail? Who of you can draw a stronger bow or bring down bigger buffalo bulls? It is time for you to be silent. You know me—you know what I have done. Now listen: I am chief. To-morrow when the east gets light we will cross the river and attack the agency! I have spoken!'

"This pleased them very much and they listened and looked eagerly while I drew on the sand lines to show where the horse corral was and where the storehouse was. I detailed five men to go to the big fence and break the chain on the gate, while I led the rest of the band to break into the storehouse. Then I said: 'Do not kill any one unless they come out against you with arms in their hands. Some of them gave me food; I shall be sorry if they are hurt.'

"That night I could not sleep at all, for my heart was swollen big in my bosom. I knew I was doing wrong, but I could not stand the reproach of my followers.

"When morning came, the river was very high, and we looked at it in astonishment, for no clouds were to be seen. The banks were steep and the current swift, and there was no use attempting to carry out our plan that day.

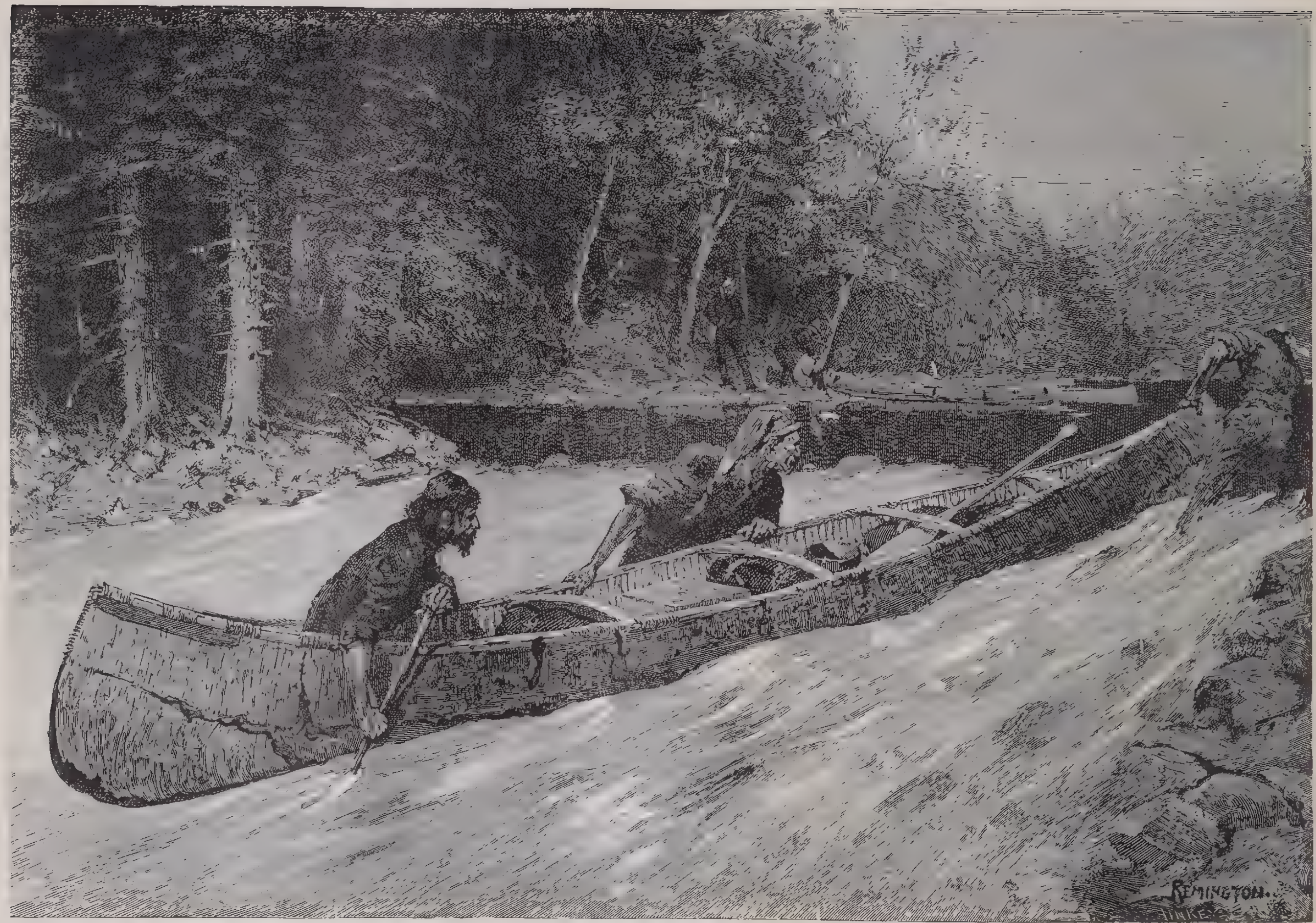


On an Indian Reservation

At Fort Reno in 1890, in the then Oklahoma Territory, there was an agency for the Cheyennes and Arapahoes. In those days one might see the Indians in their fantastic mixture of colors and beads and red flannel and feathers—so theatrical in appearance that the visitor expected to see even the army officers look back over their shoulders when one of these braves rode by.

Illustration from
THE WEST FROM A CAR WINDOW
by Richard Harding Davis

Originally published in
HARPER'S WEEKLY, *May 14, 1892*



In a Stiff Current

Illustration from
TALKING MUSQUASH
by Julian Ralph

Originally published in
Harper's Magazine, *March, 1892*

"'We must wait,' I said, and with black looks and aching bellies we waited all that day. 'The river will go down to-morrow,' I said, to comfort them.

"We had only a little dried beef to eat and the river water to drink, and my warriors were very hungry.

That second morning I was awake before dawn, watching to see what the river had done during the night. Behold, it was an arrow's length higher than before! Then I said: "Friends, I am no liar. I started on this plan with a heart to carry it out, but now I am deeply troubled. I did not sleep last night, for a pain in my breast kept me awake. I will not deceive you. I am glad the water is deeper this morning. I believe it is a sign from the Great Spirit that we are to turn back and leave these white people in peace.'

"But to this Crow Kill and most of the others would not listen. 'If we go back now,' said he, 'everybody will laugh at us.'

"Quickly I turned upon him and cried out: 'Are you the boaster who has prattled of our plans? The camp will know nothing of our designs if you have not let your long tongue rattle on the outside of your mouth.' At this he fell silent and I went on. 'Now I will wait one more day. If the river is high to-morrow—the third day—then it will surely be a sign, and we must all bow to the will of the Great One who is above us.'

"To this they all agreed, for the sky was still clear and blue and the river was never known to rise on three successive days. They put their weapons in order, and I recounted my words of instruction as to the battle.

"I went aside a little from the camp that night, and took my watch on a little mound. The moon rose big in the east and made a shining trail over the water. When a boy I used to think, may be that trail led to the land of the spirits—and my heart was full of peaceful thoughts that night. I had no hate of anybody." The old man's voice was now deep and grave and no one laughed. "I prayed to the Great Spirit to send the water so that I could go back without shame. All night I heard the water whisper, whisper in the grass. It grew broader and broader and the moon passed over my head. I slept a little, and then I woke, for something cold had touched my heel. I looked down and in the grass at my feet lay the shining edge of the river.

"I leaped up and ran and touched the others. 'See,' I called out, 'the water has come to speak to you!' and I scooped water from the river's edge and flung it over them. 'The Great Spirit has spoken. All night I heard it whisper in the grass. It said: "*Peace, peace! You must go to war no more.*" Come. We will ride away with clean hands and glad hearts.'"

As he finished his story Big Elk put away his pipe abstractedly, as though his mind yet dwelt on the past. His hearers were silent and very serious. He had touched the deepest chord in the red man's soul—the chord which vibrates when the Great Spirit speaks to him in dreams.

LONE WOLF'S OLD GUARD

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NOW it happened that Lone Wolf's camp was on the line between the land of the Cheyennes and the home of his own people, the Kiowas, but he did not know this. He had lived there long, and the white man's maps were as unimportant to him as they had been to the Cheyennes. When he moved there he considered it to be his—a gift direct from the Creator—with no prior rights to be overstepped.

But the Consolidated Cattle Company, having secured the right to enclose a vast pasture, cared nothing for any red man's claim, provided they stood in with the government. A surveying party was sent out to run lines for fences.

Lone Wolf heard of these invaders while they were at work north of him, and learned in some mysterious way that they were to come down the Elk and cut through his camp. To his friend John, the interpreter, he sent these words:

"The white man must not try to build a fence across my land. I will fight if he does. Washington is not behind this thing. He would not build a fence through my lines without talking with me. I have sent to the agent of the Kiowas, he knows nothing about it—it is all a plan of the cattlemen to steal my lands. Tell them that we have smoked over this news—we have decided. This fence will not be built."

When "Johnny Smoker" brought this stern message to the camp of the surveyors some of them promptly threw up their hands. Jim Bellows, scout and interpreter, was among these, and his opinion had weight, for he wore his hair long and posed as an Indian fighter of large experience.

"Boys," he began, impressively, "we got to get out o' here as soon as darkness covers us. We're sixty miles from the fort, and only fifteen all told, and not half-armed. Old Lone Wolf holds over us, and we might as well quit and get help."

This verdict carried the camp, and the party precipitately returned to Darlington to confer with the managers of the company.

Pierce, the chief man, had reasons for not calling on the military authorities. His lease was as yet merely a semi-private arrangement between the Secretary of the Interior and himself, and he feared the consequences of a fight with Lone Wolf—publicity, friction, might cause the withdrawal of his lease; therefore he called in John Seger, and said:

"Jack, can you put that line through?"

"I could, but I don't want to. Lone Wolf is a good friend of mine, and I don't want to be mixed up in a mean job."

"Oh, come now—you mustn't show the white flag. I need you. I want you to pick out five or six men of grit and go along and see that this line is run. I can't be fooling around here all summer. Here's my lease, signed by the Secretary, as you see. It's all straight, and this old fool of an Indian must move."

Jack reluctantly consented, and set to work to hire a half dozen men of whose courage he had personal knowledge. Among these was a man by the name of Tom Speed, a borderman of great hardihood and experience. To him he said:

"Tom, I don't like to go into this thing; but I'm hard up, and Pierce has given me the contract to build the fence if we run the line, and it looks like we got to do it. Now I wish you'd saddle up and help me stave off trouble. How does it strike you?"

"It's nasty business, Jack; but I reckon we might better do it than let some tenderfoot go in and start a killin'. I'm busted flat, and if the pay is good, I jest about feel obliged to take it."

So it happened that two avowed friends of the red man led this second expedition against Lone Wolf's camp. Pierce sent his brother as boss, and with him went the son of one of the principal owners, a Boston man, by the name of Ross. Speed always called him "the Dude," though he dressed quite simply, as dress goes in Roxbury. He wore a light suit of gray wool, "low-quartered shoes," and a "grape box hat." He was armed with a pistol, which wouldn't kill a turtledove at fifteen feet. Henry Pierce, on the contrary, was a reckless and determined man.

Moving swiftly across the Divide, they took up the line on Elk Creek, and started directly toward Lone Wolf's camp. As they were nearing the bend in the river where Lone Wolf was camped, a couple of young warriors came riding leisurely up from the south. They were very cordial in their greeting, and after shaking hands all around pleasantly inquired:

"What are you doing here?"

"Running a line to mark out the land which the cattlemen have leased of the Cheyennes."

"We will go along and see where you are going," they replied.

A couple of hours later, while they were still with the camp, two others came riding quietly in from the east. They said, "We are looking for horses," and after shaking hands and asking Seger what the white men were doing, rode forward to join their companions, who seemed deeply interested in the surveyors and their instruments. Turning to Pierce, Jack said,

"You noticed that these four men were armed, I reckon?"

"Oh, yes, but they are all right. Didn't you see how they shook hands all round? They're just out hunting up ponies."

"Yes, I saw that; but I noticed they had plenty of ammunition and that their guns were bright. Indians don't hunt horses in squads, Mr. Pierce."

Pierce smiled, giving Seger a sidewise glance. "Are you getting nervous? If you are, you can drop to the rear."

Now Seger had lived for the larger part of his life among the red people, and knew their ways. He answered, quietly:

"There are only four of them now; you'll see more of them soon," and he pointed away to the north, where the heads of three mounted men were rising into sight over a ridge. These also proved to be young Kiowas, thoroughly armed, who asked the same question of the manager, and in conclusion pleasantly said,

"We'll just go along and see how you do it."

As they rode forward Seger uttered a more pointed warning.

"Mr. Pierce, I reckon you'd better make some better disposition of your men. They are all strung out here, with their guns on their backs, in no kind of shape to make a defense."

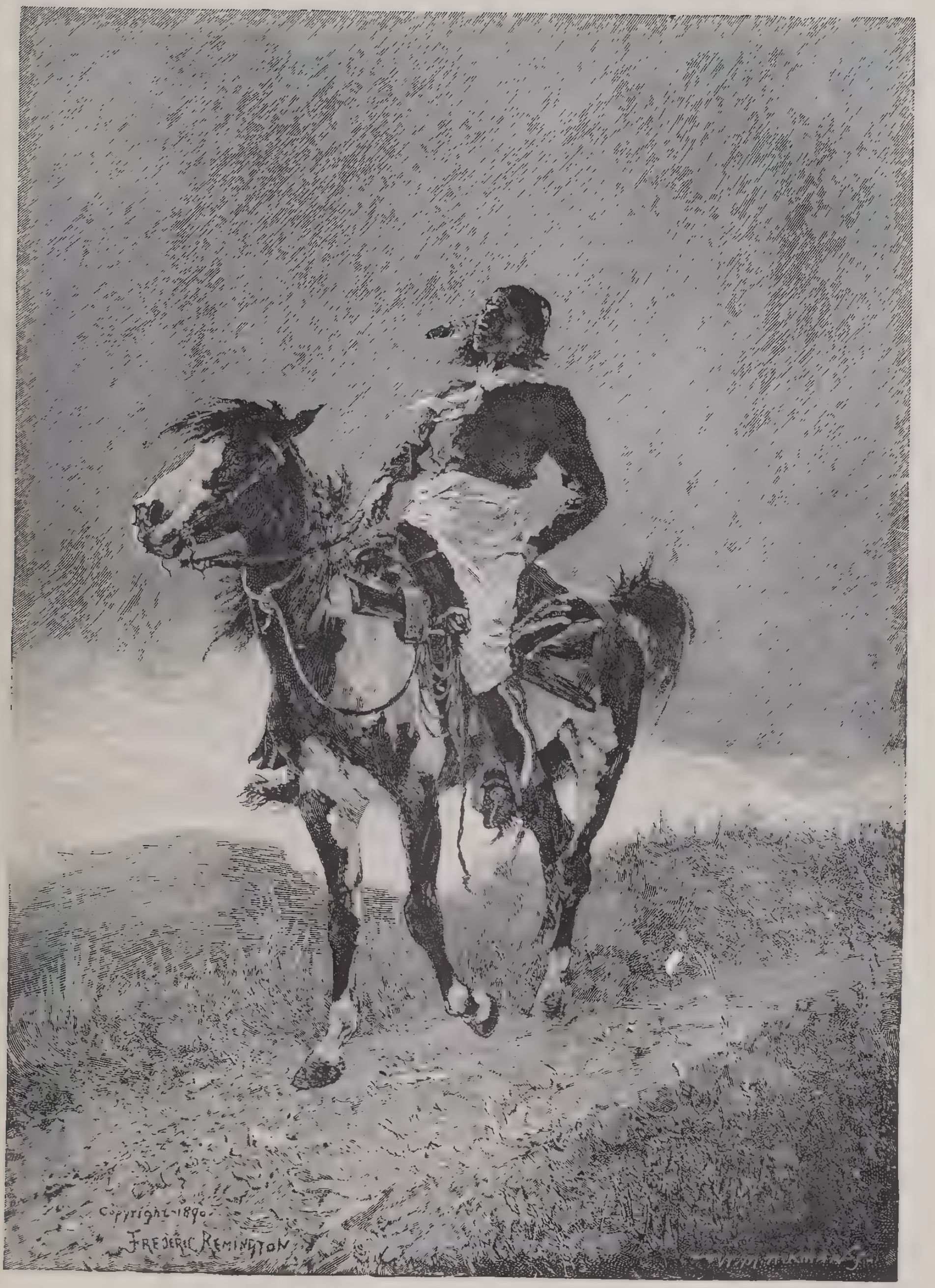
Pierce was a little impressed by the scout's earnestness, and took trouble to point out the discrepancy between "a bunch of seven cowardly Indians" and his own band of twenty brave and experienced men.

"That's all right," replied Seger; "but these seven men are only spies, sent out to see what we are going to do. We'll have to buckle up with Lone Wolf's whole band very soon."

A few minutes later the seven young men rode quietly by and took a stand on a ridge a little in front of the surveyors. As he approached them, Seger perceived a very great change in their demeanor. They no longer smiled; they seemed grim, resolute, and much older. From a careless, laughing group of young men they had become soldiers—determined, disciplined, and dignified. Their leader, riding forth, held up his hand, and said,

"Stop; you must wait here till Lone Wolf comes."

Meanwhile, in the little city of tents, a brave drama was being enacted. Lone Wolf, a powerful man of middle age, was sitting in council with his people. The long-expected had happened—the cattlemen had begun to mark off the red man's land as their own, and the time had come either to submit or to repel the invaders. To submit was hard, to fight hopeless. Their world was still narrow, but they had a benumbing conception of the power and the remorseless greed of the white man.

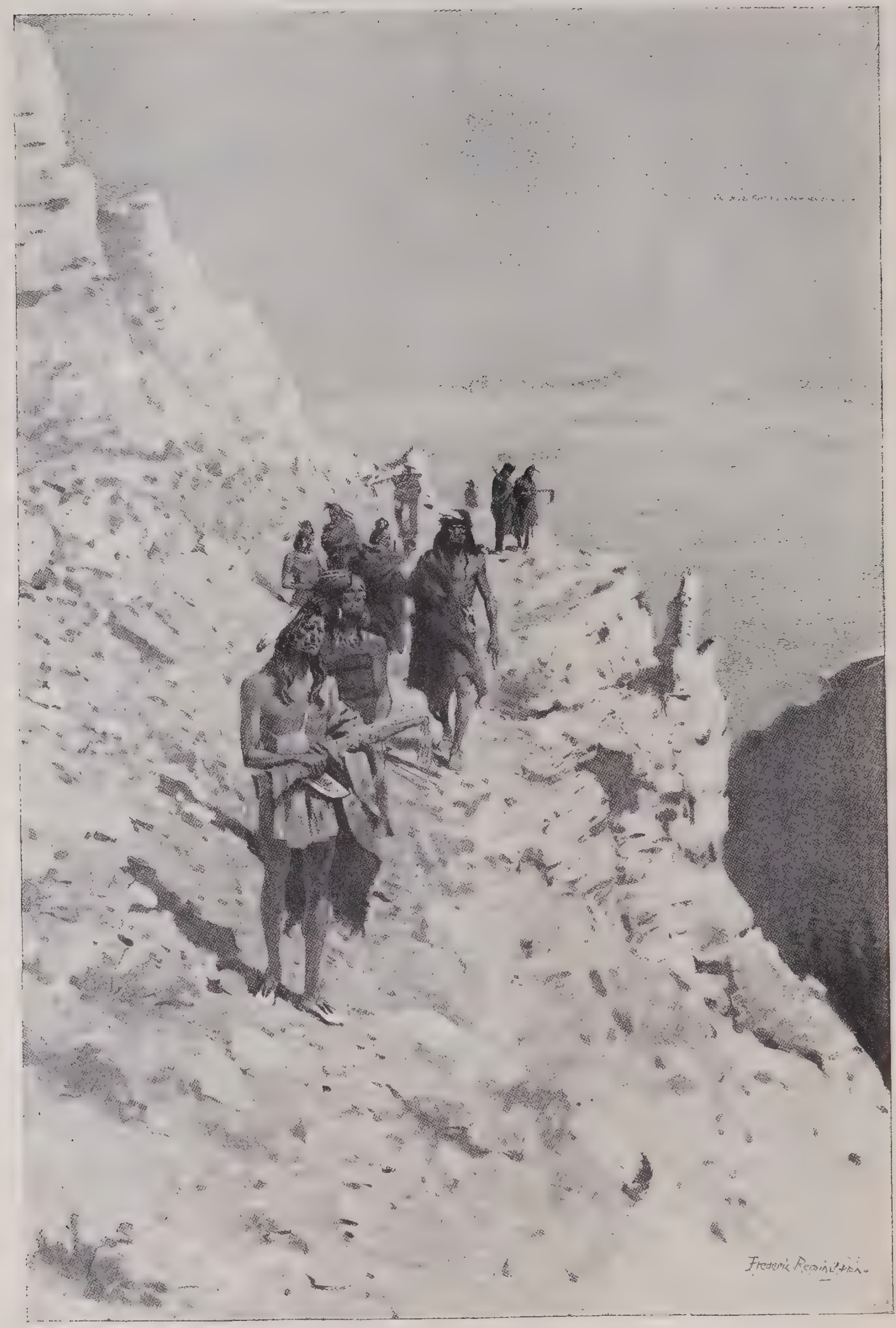


A Modern Comanche Indian

In the 'nineties the Comanche of the Fort Sill region was considered a good type of the Indian of that day. Not only was he the most expert horse-stealer on the plains—a title of honor rather than reproach among Indians—but he was particularly noteworthy for knowing more about a horse and horse-breeding than any other Indian.

Illustration from
SOME INDIAN RIDERS
by Colonel Theodore Ayrault Dodge, U.S.A.

Originally published in
HARPER'S MAGAZINE, *May, 1891*



A Band of Piegan Indians in the Mountains

Having made out the camp of the Crow Indians in the plain many miles below, the Piegans are making their way slowly through the mountains on foot, their object being to raid the Crow camp and steal their war ponies.

Illustration from
SUN-DOWN'S HIGHER SELF
by Frederic Remington

Originally published in
HARPER'S MAGAZINE, *November, 1898*

"We can kill those who come," said Lone Wolf. "They are few, but behind them are the soldiers and men who plough."

At last old White Buffalo rose—he had been a great leader in his day, and was still much respected, though he had laid aside his chieftainship. He was bent and gray and wrinkled, but his voice was still strong, and his eyes keen.

"My friends, listen to me! During seventy years of my life I lived without touching the hand of a white man. I have always opposed warfare, except when it was necessary; but now the time has come to fight. Let me tell you what to do. I see here some thirty old men, who, like me, are nearing the grave. This thing we will do—we old men—we will go out to war against these cattlemen. We will go forth and die in defense of our lands. Big Wolf, come—and you, my brother, Standing Bear."

As he called the roll of the gray old defenders, the old women broke into heart-piercing wailing, intermingled with exultant cries as some brave wife or sister caught the force of the heroic responses, which leaped from the lips of their fathers and husbands. A feeling of awe fell over the young men as they watched the fires flame once more in the dim eyes of their grandsires, and when all had spoken, Lone Wolf rose and stepped forth, and said,

"Very well; then I will lead you."

"Whosoever leads us goes to certain death," said White Buffalo. "It is the custom of the white men to kill the leader. You will fall at the first fire. I will lead."

Lone Wolf's face grew stern. "Am I not your war chief? Whose place is it to lead? If I die, I fall in combat for my land, and you, my children, will preserve my name in song. We do not know how this will end, but it is better to end in battle than to have our lands cut in half beneath our feet."

The bustle and preparation began at once. When all was ready the thirty gray and withered old men, beginning a low humming song, swept through the camp and started on their desperate charge, Lone Wolf leading them. "Some of those who go will return, but if the white men fight, I will not return," he sang, as they began to climb the hill on whose top the white man could be seen awaiting their coming.

Halfway up the hill they met some of the young warriors. "Go bring all the white men to the council," said Lone Wolf.

As the white men watched the band leaving the village and beginning to ascend the hill, Speed turned and said: "Well, Jack, what do you think of it? Here comes a war party—painted and armed."

"I think it's about an even chance whether we ever cross the Washita again or not. Now, you are a married man with children, and I wouldn't blame you if you pulled out right this minute."

"I feel meaner about this than anything I ever did," replied Speed, "but I am going to stay with the expedition."

As Lone Wolf and his heroic old guard drew near, Seger thrilled with the significance of this strange and solemn company of old men in full war-paint, armed with all kinds of old-fashioned guns, and bows and arrows. As he looked into their wrinkled faces, the scout perceived that these grandsires had come resolved to die. He divined what had taken place in camp. Their exalted heroism was written in the somber droop of their lips. "We can die, but we will not retreat!" In such wise our grandsires fought.

Lone Wolf led his Spartan host steadily on till near enough to be heard without effort. He then halted, took off his war-bonnet and hung it on the pommel of his saddle. Lifting both palms to the sky, he spoke, and his voice had a solemn boom in it: "The Great Father is looking down on us. He sees us. He knows I speak the truth. He gave us this land. We are the first to inhabit it. No one else has any claim to it. It is ours, and I will go under the sod before any cattlemen shall divide it and take it away from us. I have said it."

When this was interpreted to him, Pierce with a look of inquiry turned to Speed. "Tell the old fool this line is going to be run, and no old scarecrows like these can stop us."

Seger, lifting his hand, signed: "Lone Wolf, you know me. I am your friend. I do not come to do you harm. I come to tell you you are wrong. All the land on my left hand the Great Father says is Cheyenne land. All on my right is Kiowa land. The Cheyennes have sold the right to their land to the white man, and we are here to mark out the line. We take only Cheyenne land."

"I do not believe it," replied the chief. "My agent knows nothing of it. Washington has not written anything to me about it. This is the work of robbers. Cattlemen will do anything for money. They are wolves. They shall not go on."

"What does he say?" asked Pierce.

"He says we must not go on."

"You tell him that he can't run any such bluff on me with his old scarecrow warriors. This lines goes through."

Lone Wolf, tense and eager, asked, "What says the white chief?"

"He says we must run the line."

Lone Wolf turned to his guard. "You may as well get ready," he said, quietly.

The old men drew closer together with a mutter of low words, and each pair of dim eyes selected their man. The clicking of their guns was ominous, and Pierce turned white.

Speed drew his revolver-holster round to the front. "They're going to fight," he said. "Every man get ready!"

But Seger, eager to avoid the appalling contest, cried out to Pierce:

"Don't do that! It's suicide to go on. These old men have come out to fight till death." To Lone Wolf he signed: "Don't shoot, my friend!—let us consider this matter. Put up your guns."

Into the hot mist of Pierce's wrath came a realization that these old men were in mighty earnest. He hesitated.

Lone Wolf saw his hesitation, and said: "If you are here by right, why do you not get the soldier chief to come and tell me? If the Great Father has ordered this—then I am like a man with his hands tied. The soldiers do not lie. Bring them!"

Seger grasped eagerly at this declaration. "There is your chance, Pierce. The chief says he will submit if the soldiers come to make the survey. Let me tell him that you will bring an officer from the fort to prove that the government is behind you."

Pierce, now fully aware of the desperate bravery of the old men, was looking for a knothole of escape. "All right, fix it up with him," he said.

Seger turned to Lone Wolf. "The chief of the surveyors says: 'Let us be friends. I will not run the line.'"

"Ho, ho!" cried the old warriors, and their faces, grim and wrinkled, broke up into smiles. They laughed, they shook hands, while tears of joy filled their eyes. They were like men delivered from sentence of death. The desperate courage of their approach was now revealed even to Pierce. They were joyous as children over their sudden release from slaughter.

Lone Wolf, approaching Seger, dismounted, and laid his arm over his friend's shoulder. "My friend," he said, with grave tenderness, "I wondered why you were with these men, and my heart was heavy; but now I see that you were here to turn aside the guns of the cattlemen. My heart is big with friendship for you. Once more you have proved my good counselor." And tears dimmed the fierceness of his eyes.

A week later, a slim, smooth-cheeked second lieutenant, by virtue of his cap and the crossed arms which decorated his collar, ran the line, and Lone Wolf made no resistance. "I have no fight with the soldiers of the Great Father," he said: "they do not come to gain my land. I now see that Washington has decreed that this fence shall be built." Nevertheless, his heart was very heavy, and in his camp his heroic old guard sat waiting, waiting!

BIG MOGGASEN

BIG MOGGASEN

FAR in the Navajoe Country there are mountains almost unknown to the white man. Beginning on the dry penon spotted land they rise to pine clad hills where many springs are. Deep cañons with wondrous cliffs of painted stone cut athwart the ranges and in crevices of these walls, so it is said, are the stone houses of most ancient peoples. It is not safe for white men to go there—especially with pick and shovel, for Big Moggasen the Chief is keenly alive to the danger of permitting miners to peer about the rocks and break them up with hammers.

Because these mountains are unknown they are alluring and men often came to the agency for permission to enter the unknown land. To them the agent said, "No, I don't want a hellabaloo raised about your death in the first place, and in the second place this reservation belongs to the Navajoes—you'd better prospect in some other country."

Big Moggasen lived far away from the agency and was never seen even by the native police. He lived quite independent of the white man's bounty. He drew no rations and his people paid no taxes. His young men tended the sheep, the old men worked in silver and his women wove blankets which they sold to the traders for coffee and flour. In such wise he lived from the time that his father's death made him a chief.

In winter his people retreated to the valleys where they were sheltered from the wind—where warm hogans of logs and dirt protected them from the cold, and in the spring when the snow began to melt they drove their flocks of black and white sheep, mixed with goats, higher in the hills. In midsummer when the valleys were baking hot, the young herders urged their herd far up among the pines where good grass grew and springs of water gushed from every cañon.

Their joys equaled their sorrows. True the old were always perishing and birth was a pain, and the sheep sometimes starved because the snow covered the grass, and the children died of throat sickness, but of such is human life in all lands. For the most part they had plenty of meat to roast, and berries and pinon nuts to make it savory, and the young men always had hearts for dancing and the young girls pulled at their robes and every one laughed in the light of the dance-fire.

But at last the people began to complain. Women chattered their discontentment as they wove their blankets under the cedars and the old men gossiped in twos and threes before their campfires. The children cried for coffee and cakes of flour, and at last Big Moggasen was forced to consider the discontent of his people. His brow was black as he rose in council to say: "What is the matter that you all grumble and whine like lame coyotes? Of old it was not so, you took what that sun spirits sent and were brave, now you have the hearts of foxes. What is it you want?"

Then Black Bear, a young chief man arose and said: "We will tell you, father. The Tinné to the south have a better time than we do. They have better clothing and coffee each day and wagons in which to ride or carry heavy loads. They have shovels with which to build hogans and to dig wells for their sheep. They have hats also which keep off the sun in summer and snow in winter. Why do we not have some of these good things also? We need wells and have nothing to dig them with. We go about bareheaded and the sun is hot on our hair. We grow tired of meat without drink. We think therefore that we should go down and see the white man and get some of these needed things."

To this applauded speech old Big Moggasen sharply replied: "I have heard of these things for a long time, but a bear does not present me with his ears for love of me. Why does the white man give these things? I have trapped deer by such sly actions. It is for some reason that our cousins are fed on sweet things by the white man. They wish to make captives of us. They will steal our children and our wives. I have known of the ways of white men for many years. I am old and my face is wrinkled with thinking about him. I am not to be instructed of boys in such a matter."

All the night long the talk raged. Big Moggasen stood like a rock in the wash of the current. He repeated again and again his arguments. "The white man does not give his coat to the Tinné without hope of pay. It is all a trick."

At last he gave way and consented to go with two of his head men and see the Little Father and find out for himself the whole truth. He went reluctantly and with drawn brows for he was not at all sure of returning again. All the old people shared his feeling but Brown Bear and Four Fingers who had traveled much laughed openly and said: "See, they go like sick men. Their heads hang down toward their feet like sick ponies. They need some of the white man's hot drink."

They traveled hard to the south for three days coming into a hot dry climate, which they did not like. There was little grass and the sheep were running to and fro searching for food somewhere, even eating sagebrush. The women were everywhere making blankets, and each night when they stopped the men of the north had coffee to drink and the people told many strange things of the whites. The old men had heard these things before but they had not really believed them. Some of the women said, "My children are away at the white man's big house. They wear the white man's clothes and eat three times each day from white dishes. They are learning the ways of the white man."

"I like it not," said Big Moggasen, "it is their plan to steal them and make them work for the white man. Why do they do these things?"

One woman held up a big round silver piece, "You see this?

My man digs for the white man far in the south where the big iron horse runs and he gets one of these every day. Therefore we have coffee and flour often—and shoes and warm clothing."

Big Moggasen shook his head and went on to the south. He came at last to the place where the soldiers used to be in the olden time and behold there were some big new red houses and many boys and girls and ten white people, and all about stood square hogans in which Tinné also lived. At the door of one of these hogans stood a white-haired man and he said:

"Friend, I do not know you but you are welcome. Come in and eat."

The old man entered and in due time Big Moggasen told his name and his errand and his fears.

To this White-hairs replied: "It is natural for you to feel so. Once I felt the same but the white man has not harmed me yet. My children have learned to speak his tongue and to write. They are happier than they were and that makes me happy. I do not understand the white people. They are strange. Their thoughts are not our thoughts but they are wonder-workers. I am in awe of them. They are wiser than the spirits. They do things which it is impossible for us to do, therefore I make friends with them. They have done me no harm. My children are fond of them and so I am content."

All the evening the old men from the northern mountains sat arguing, questioning, shaking their heads. At last they said, "Very well, in the morning we will go to the Little Father and hear what he has to say. To us it now seems that these strange people have thrown dust in your eyes and that they are scheming to make pack-ponies of you."

In the morning they drank again of the white man's coffee with sweet in it and ate of the white man's bread and it was all very seductive to the tongue. Then old White-hairs led them to the Little Father's room.

The Little Father was a small man who wore bits of glass before his eyes. He was short-spoken and his voice was high and shrill but calm.

"What is it?" he said to White-hairs in the Tinné tongue.

"These are they from the mountains," replied White-hairs. "This is Big Moggasen."

The Little Father rose and held out his hand, "How is your health?"

Big Moggasen took his hand but coldly.

"This is Tall-man and this Silver Arrow."

After they had shaken hands the Little Father said: "Sit down and we will smoke." He gave them some tobacco and when they had rolled it into little leaves of paper he said: "Well now, what can I do for you?"

After a long pause Big Mogassen began abruptly: "We live in the mountains, three days' journey from here. We are poor. We have no wagons or shovels like the people who live here. We are of one blood with them. We do not see why we should not have these things. We have come for them. My people want wagons to carry logs in and shovels to dig wells and harnesses to put on our ponies."

To this the Little Father replied: "Yes, we have these good things and I give them to your people. They are for those who are good and who walk in the white man's trail. We wish to help you also. Did you bring any children with you?"

"No."

"You must do that. We wish to educate your children. If you bring twenty children to school I will see what I can do for you."

Big Moggasen harshly replied: "I did not come to talk about school."

The answer was quick and stern: "But I did. You will get nothing until you send your children to me to be schooled."

Big Moggasen's veins swelled with the rush of his hot blood. He leaped to his feet tense and rigid. "No. My children shall not come. I do not believe in the white man or his ways. I do not like the white man's ways. I am old and I have seen many things. The white man makes our young men drunk. He steals away our daughters. He takes away their hearts with sweet drinks and clothes. He is a wolf."

The Little Father remained calm. "It is true there are bad white men, but there are those who are good."

"Those I do not see," growled the chief. "All my life I have thrust the white men away because they came to steal our land. I do not want my children to learn their ways."

"Then you can't have any of the great fellow's presents."

"Then I will go home as I came, hungry and cold," replied the old man, wrapping his blanket around him.

"To show that I am not angry," said the Little Father, "I will give you something to eat on your way home."

The old man grew stern and set. "I did not come to beg of the white man. I did not come to ask anything for myself. I came because my people in council decided to send me. I have come. I am old and I have not departed from the ways of my fathers. I have lived thus far without the white man's help, I will die as I have lived. I have spoken."

Turning abruptly he went out, followed by his companions and old White-hairs, whose face was very sad.

THE STORM-CHILD

THE STORM-CHILD

THERE was tranquillity in the warm lodge of Waumdisapa, chief of the Tetons. It was always peaceful there for it is the duty of a headman to render his people harmonious and happy—but it was doubly tranquil on this midwinter day, for a mighty tumult had arisen in the tops of the tall willows, and across the grass of the bleak plain an icy dust was wildly sliding. Nearly all the men of the band were in camp, so fierce was the blast.

Waumdisapa listened tranquilly to the streams of snow lashing his tepee's cap and felt it on his palm as it occasionally sifted down through the smoke-vent, and said, "The demons may howl and the white sands slide—my people are safe here behind the hills. With food and plenty of blankets we can wait."

Hour by hour he smoked, or gravely meditated, his mind filled with the pursuits and dangers of the past. Now and again as an aged wrinkled warrior lifted the door-flap he was invited to enter to partake of tobacco and to talk of the gathering spirits of winter.

In a neighboring lodge the chief's wife was at work beside her kettle singing a low song as she minded her fire, and through the roaring, whistling, moaning riot of the air-sprites other women could be heard cheerfully beating their way from fire to fire. A few hunters were still abroad, but no one was alarmed about them. The tempest was a subject of jest and comparison with other days. No one feared its grim power. Was it not a part of nature, an enemy always to be met!

Suddenly the sound of a moaning cry broke in upon the chief's meditation. The tent-door was violently thrown up and with a hoarse wail, Oma, a young widow, entered the lodge, and threw herself before the feet of Waumdisapa. "My baby! My little boy is lost in the snow. O father, pity me—help me!"

Quickly the chief questioned her. "Where?"

"Out there!" she motioned with her hand—a wild gesture toward the bleak remorseless north. "I was with my brothers hunting the buffalo—the storm came on—my baby wandered away from the camp. We could not find him. They came away—taking me, too. They would not let me stay. Send hunters—find him. Take pity on me, my father!"

The chief turned to her brothers (who had followed her and were looking on with sad faces) and said, "Is this true?"

"It is!" they said. "We were in temporary camp. We were resting. The tempest leaped upon us. All was in confusion. The baby wandered away—the snow must have covered him quickly. We could not find him though we searched hard and long. The storm grew. Some of us came on to bring the women and children to camp. Three of us, my brothers and I, remained to look for the boy. We could not find him. He is buried deep in the snow."

The chief, touched by the woman's agony, rose in reproof. "Go back!" he said, sternly. "Take other of the young men. Cover every foot of ground near your camp."

"The night is coming."

"No matter—search!" commanded the chief.

A party of braves was soon made up. As they rode away into the blast Oma wished to go with them, but the chief prevented her.

All the afternoon she remained in the chief's lodge crowding close to his feet—listening, moaning, waiting. She was weak with hunger, and shivering with cold, but she would not eat, would not go to her silent and lonely fireplace.

"No, no, father, I will stay with you," she said.

Swiftly the darkness fell upon the camp. The cold intensified. The tempest increased in violence, howling above the willows like an army of flying demons. The snows beat upon the stout skins of the lodges and fell in heaps which grew ever higher, but the mothers of the camp came one by one, young and old, to comfort the stricken one, speaking words of cheer.

"They will bring him."

"The brave hunters will find your boy."

"They know no fear."

"They have sharp eyes."

"Their hearts are warm."

"They will rescue him."

Nevertheless, two by two the hardy trailers returned, cold, weary, covered with ice, their faces sad, their eyes downcast. "Blackness is on the plain," they reported. "Nothing moves but the snow. We have searched hard. We have called, we have listened close, no voice replies. Nothing is to be seen, or heard."

With each returning unsuccessful scout the mother's grief and despair deepened. Heartbroken, she lay prone on the ground, her face in the dust, while the sorrowful songs of the women went on around her. Truly hers was a piteous plight.

"To lose one's only child is sad. She has no man. She is alone."

"The sun-god has forsaken her," said one old woman. "He is angry. She has neglected some sacrifice."

At last Hacone, the bravest, most persistent scout of all, one who loved Oma, came silently in and dropped exhausted beside the chieftain's fire.

"Night, black stranger, has come," he said, "I can search no longer. Twice I lost my way, twice my horse fell. Blinding was the wind. My breath was taken. Long I looked for the camp. The signal fires guided me. Dead is the child."

With a whimper of anguish the poor mother fell back upon the floor and lay as one dead, hearing no sound. All night long her low moans went on—and the women who lifted and bore her away sang songs of grief with intent to teach her that sorrow was the lot of all women and that happiness was but a brief spot of sunlight in a world of shadow.

II

The morning broke at last, still, cold, clear, and serene. The tall trees stood motionless to the tips as though congealed into iron, and the smoke of each fire rose slow as though afraid to leave the tepee's mouth. Here and there an old woman scurried about bearing fuel. The dogs slunk through the camp whining with cold —holding up their half-frozen feet. The horses uneasily circled, brushing close against each other for warmth. Indeed it was a morning of merciless cruelty—the plain was a measureless realm of frost.

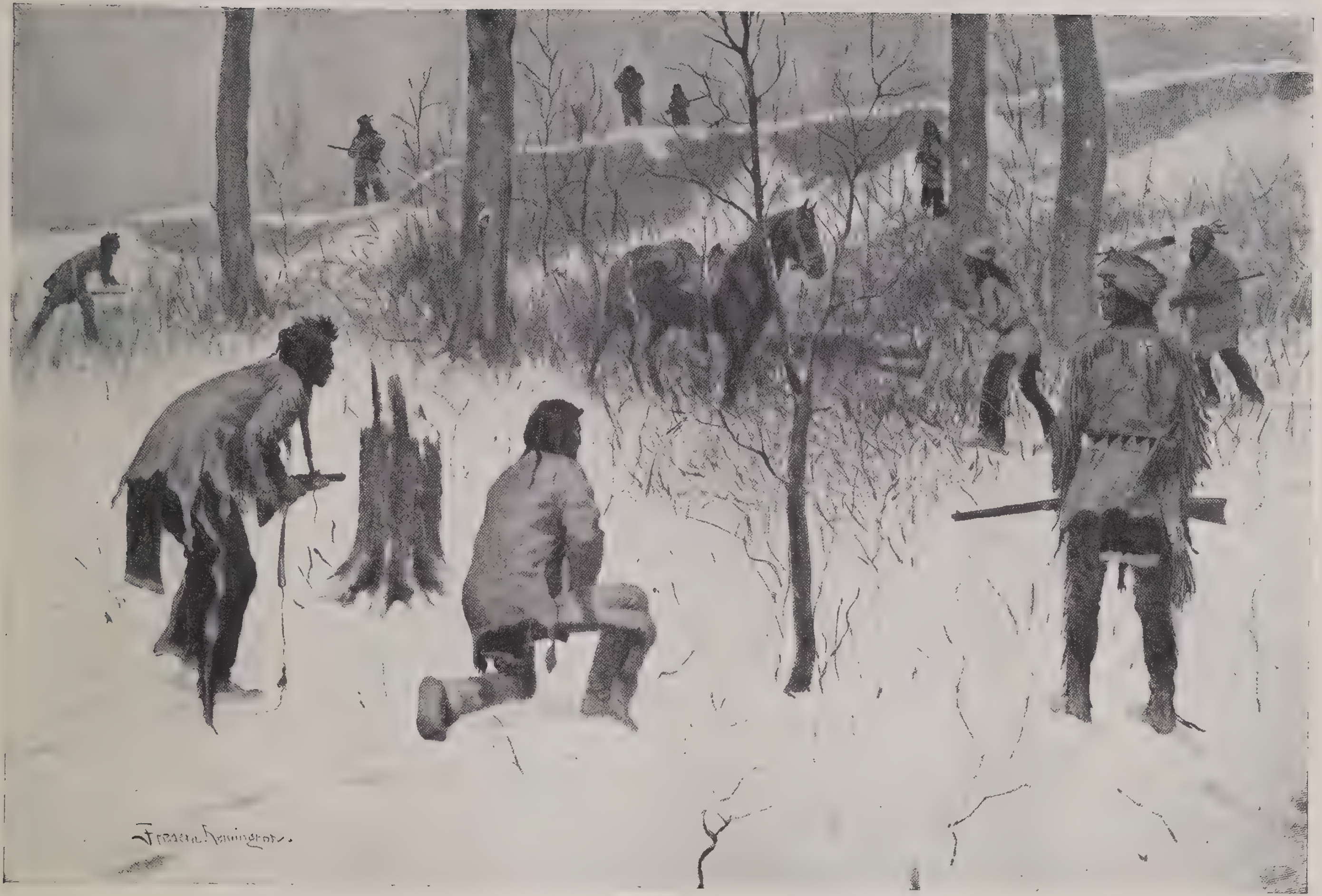
In Oma's tent physical agony was added to grief, or so it seemed, but in truth the mother knew only sorrow. She was too deeply schooled by the terrors of the plains not to know how surely the work of the winter demon had been done. Somewhere out there her sweet little babe was lying stiff and stark in his icy bed—somewhere on the savage and relentless upland his small limbs were at the mercy of the cold.

One by one her friends reassembled to help her bear her loss—eager to offer food, quick to rebuild her fire—but she would not listen, could not face the cheerful flame. Meat and the glow of embers were of no avail to revive her frozen, hopeless heart.

The chief himself came at last to see her—to inquire again minutely of her loss. "We will seek further," he said. "We will find the boy. We will bring him to you. Be patient."

Suddenly a shout arose. "A white man! a white man!" and the warning cry carried forward from lip to lip announced the news to Waumdisapa.

"A white man comes—riding a pony and bearing something in his arms. He is within the camp circle!"


Frederic Remington.

Footprints in the Snow

To an old hunter, footprints in the snow are as an open book, and it was by these "signs" on the trail that the buffalo-hunters knew the Sioux had crawled in upon the dispatch-bearer as he rested in a timbered bottom and poured in the bullets that put an end to his career. To the trooper, the plains white with snow had seemed lonely indeed, but, as he well knew, one could not, in those days, trust the plains to be as lonely as they looked, what with the possibility of Mr. Sitting Bull or Mr. Crazy Horse, with a band of his braves, popping out of some coulee, intent upon taking the scalp of any chance wayfarer.

Illustration from
WHEN A DOCUMENT IS OFFICIAL
by Frederic Remington

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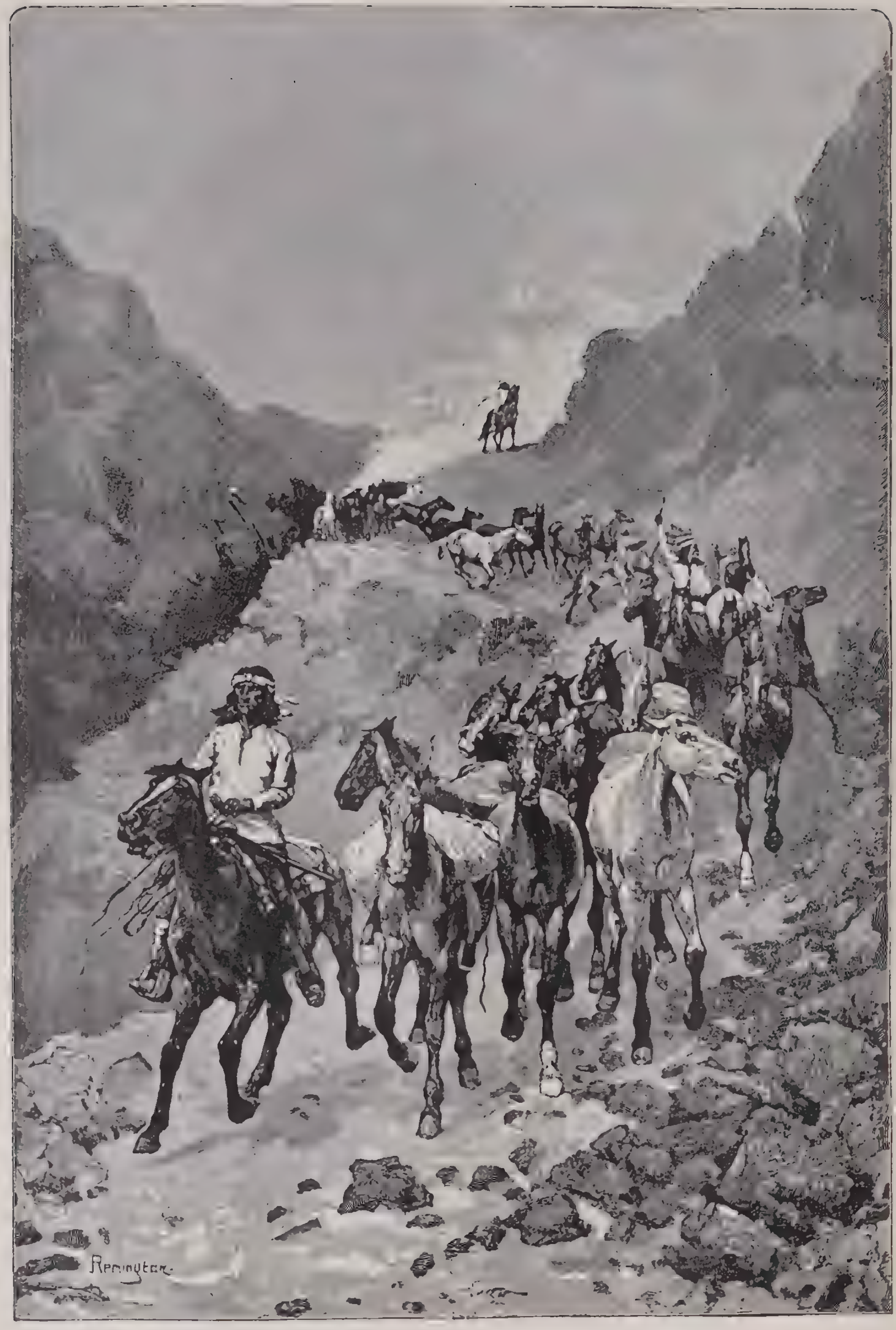

Geronimo and His Band Returning from a Raid in Mexico

Leaving their reservation under such leaders as Geronimo, the Apache Indians, in the period 1882-86, used to take refuge in the Sierra Madre Mountains, and from this stronghold raid the settlements in Mexico and Arizona.

Illustration from
BORDER TROUBLES
by William M. Edwardy

Originally published in
HARPER'S WEEKLY, *August 18, 1888*

"Bring him to me!" commanded Waumdisapa. "I will know his errand."

To all this Oma paid little heed. What to her was any living creatures now that she was utterly bereaved?

But the wail of a child pierced her heart and she sprang up, listened intently, just as a smiling young white man, carrying a bundle in his arms, entered the door and nodding carelessly to the chief, said in Sioux, "Here's a little chap I found in the snow last night. I reckon it belongs here."

The frenzied mother leaped toward him and snatched the babe from his arms. Her cry of joy was sweet to hear, and as she cuddled the baby close, the hunter's brown face grew very tender—though he laughed.

"I reckon that youngster's gone to the right spot, chief. I thought he belonged to your band."

Then Waumdisapa shook him by the hand and commanded him to sit. "Go shelter the white man's horse," he said, to his people, "and let a feast be cried, for the lost child is found. This warm-hearted stranger has brought the dead to life, and we are all glad."

The hunter laughed in some dismay, and put away the food which the women began to press upon him. "I must go, chief. My people wait. I do not deserve this fuss."

"I will send a messenger to say you are here. They shall also come to our feast."

"They may kill your messenger for we are at war."

The chief considered. "Write large on a piece of paper. Say that we are at war no more. This deed has made us friends. You are one of us—we will honor you. We cannot let you go. See the mother's joy? She wishes to thank you!"

It was true. Oma, holding her child in her arms, was kneeling before the young hunter, her face upturned in gratitude. She caught his hand and kissed it, pressing it to her cheek.

"You are a good man. You have a brave warm heart. You have restored my child. I love you. I will love all white people hereafter. Stay and feast with us for I am very happy."

Flushed with embarrassment the young man shrank away. "Don't do that! I have done very little. Any white man would have acted the same."

But the people of the snow would not have it so. Smilingly they laid hands upon him and would not let him go. "No, you must remain and dance with us. We will send for your companions—we will write a new treaty of peace. Our gratitude shall make us brothers."

Like a flower that springs up in the wet grass after a rain the mother's head lifted and her face shone with joy. The child was untouched of frost, not even a toe had been pinched, and he fell asleep again as soon as he was fed. Then Oma laid him down and came to flutter about his rescuer with gestures of timid worship. She smiled with such radiance that the young man wondered at the change in her, and her ecstasy awoke his pity. Then the chief said:

"See! Oma is a widow. She already loves you. Stay with us and take her to wife."

Then the youth grew more uneasy than ever and with hesitation said: "No, chief, I can't do that—far away among the white villagers is a girl who is to be my wife. I cannot marry anyone else. I have made a vow."

The gentle old chief did not persist, but the women perceived how Oma's gratitude grew and one of them took the hunter by the sleeve and while Oma stood before him in confusion said: "See! You have made her very happy. She desires to show you how much she owes to you—stay and be happy."

He shook them off, but in no unkindly way. "No," he repeated. "I must go," and stepped toward the door of the lodge, strangely moved by the passion of this primitive scene. These grateful women moved him but he looked not back.

Waumdisapa followed him. "Friend, tell me your name."

"Your people call me 'Blazing Hand,'" returned the young man.

"Hah!" shouted the chief in surprise. "Blazing Hand! you are much admired among my men. You are swift to shoot."

Blazing Hand! The name ran from lip to lip, for they had all heard of this reckless and remorseless young outlaw. More eagerly than ever they crowded to see him—but the chief after a moment regained his calm dignity of manner. "Blazing Hand, you have befriended my people before. Now we are doubly anxious to have you remain with us . . ."

The young man lifted the door-flap. "*Addios*," he said, fixing his eyes on Oma.

She plucked her child from its bed and ran toward him. "I have heard your name. It shall remain in my ears while I live and I will teach my child that he may say it after I am dead."

Waumdisapa called to his scouts: "See that this man is guided safely to his fellows. And let no one molest him. Henceforth we are brothers. He and his may hunt and trap where they choose on Teton land."

The light was gray on the face of Oma as the stranger rode away—but the voice of her babe comforted her. Her smile came back and she said: "Perhaps the kind hunter will return. The face of Blazing Hand will live forever in my heart."

THE BLOOD LUST

THE BLOOD LUST

JOHN SEGER, having been detailed to run a mail route across the country from Fort Reno to Camp Supply, selected his friend Little Robe to be his guide. Little Robe was Cheyenne, a tall, grave and rather taciturn man, much respected in his tribe. Just as they were about to start he said to his employer, with gentle decision:

"I don't know you—you don't know me. I am Cheyenne, you are white man. It is best that we take no weapons along. Each of us may carry a knife, to use about the camp, but no guns."

This struck Seger as a bit risky, but, realizing that his life was in the red man's hands anyway, he decided to accept. "Very well," said he. "If you don't need a gun, I don't."

Driving a span of horses and carrying a meager camping outfit Seger set forth hopefully. It was in the days of the Star Routers, and this was a bogus line, but neither he nor Robe knew it. They were indeed very much in earnest.

The weather was beautiful, and the prairies glorious. Larks were whistling, plovers crying. "I never enjoyed a ride more in my life," said Seger, and, as for Little Robe, he proved a capital companion. His talk was most instructive. He never once became coarse or commonplace, and after the second day Seger trusted him perfectly—though he went to his blanket the first night with some apprehension.

He soon saw why Robe had been recommended to him. His knowledge of the whole country was minute. Every stream suggested a story, every hill discovered a memory. As he came to like his white companion, he talked more and more freely of his life as a warrior, telling tales quite as Seger would have done had he been able to speak of his part in the Vicksburg campaign. To the chief, every enterprise of his career was honorable. It's all in the point of view.

He knew the heavens, too, and could lay his course almost as well by night as by day, and Seger soon came to have a genuine admiration as well as a feeling of affection for him. He was handy as a woman around the camp kettle, and never betrayed weariness or anger or doubt.

One night as they rode down to camp in the valley of a small stream Robe looked about him with more than usual care, and a perceptible shadow fell over his face. "I know this place," he said, and Seger could see that he was saddened by some recollection connected with it.

He said no more till after they had eaten their supper, and were sitting beside the smouldering fire; then he began slowly to utter his mind.

"Aye, friend, I know this place. It is filled with sad thoughts. I camped here many years ago. I was a young warrior then and reckless, but my wife was with me, and my little daughter." His lips took on a sweetness almost feminine as he paused. "She was very lovely, my child. She had lived five years and she could swim like an otter. She used to paddle about in this little pool. Several days I camped here debating whether to go on into the south country or not. You see, friend, I was in need of horses and in those days it was the custom for the young warriors of my tribe to make raids among the peaked hats, whom you call Mexicans, in order to drive off their horses. This was considered brave and honorable, and I was eager to go and enrich myself.

"My wife did not wish me to take this journey. She wept when I told her my plan. 'Do not go,' she said, 'stay with me!' Then I began to consider taking her and my little daughter with me—for I did not like to be separated from them even for a day. My child was so pretty, her cheeks were so round and her eyes so bright. She had little dimpled hands, and when she put her arms about my neck my heart was like wax."

The old warrior's voice trembled as he reached this point in his story, and for a long time he could not go on. At last he regained composure. "It was foolish to make the raid—it was very wrong to take my little girl, but I could not leave her behind. Therefore one day with my wife and daughter and my three brothers, I set out into the southwest, resolute to win some ponies.

"After the first two days we traveled at night and camped in a concealed place during the day. Slowly we stole forward, until at last we came near a small village of The Peaked Hats, where some fine horses and mules were reported to be had by advancing with boldness and skill.

"My own ponies were poor and weak and as I saw the horses about this village I became very eager to own some of them. Especially did I desire a fine sorrel mare. It was not easy to get her, for these people had been many times raided by the Comanches and were very careful to round up their best animals at night and put them into a high corral. Nevertheless, I told my brothers to be ready and that I myself would adventure to the gate, open it, and drive forth our prizes.

"My wife begged me to give up my plan. She wept and clung to my arm. 'It will lead to evil, I feel it,' she said. 'You will be killed.' But I had given my word. I could not fail of it. 'Take my wife,' I said sternly to my younger brother. 'Take her and the little one and ride northward toward that black butte. I will meet you there at daybreak,' I said.

"My wife took our little daughter in her arms, and my brother led them away. I could hear my wife moaning as she rode into the dark night ——"

Again the deep voice faltered, as the memory of this parting wail came back to him, but he soon resumed quietly: "Slowly I crept forward. I reached the corral, but could not find the gate.

It was on the side nearest the village and as I crept round feeling of the poles, the dogs began to bark. I kept on, however, and at last found and tore down the bars. Entering the corral, I began to lash the horses with my lariat. As the sorrel was about to pass me I caught her and leaped upon her back. In a few moments I was driving the whole herd like a whirlwind across the plain.

"My brother joined me and we tried to turn the herd northward, but the leaders gave me great trouble. At last some of them escaped and returned to the village. We heard shouting, we were pursued. Roping and tying some of the best of the ponies we could overtake, we drove them before us toward the butte, well pleased with our capture.

"We traveled hard, overtaking my brother and my wife and baby girl, but thereafter we were unable to make speed on account of the child and its mother, and on account of the horses, two of which were fine but very stubborn. I could not consent to set them loose though I knew I was endangering my dear ones by delay. It was very foolish and I was made to suffer for my folly.

"The Mexicans must have had other horses hidden and ready saddled, for they came swiftly on our trail and before long they began to shoot. Almost the first shot they fired struck my wife in the back, and passing entirely through her body wounded my little daughter. I turned then and began to shoot in return and my pursuers fell back. We abandoned all the horses but two and when my wife told me of her hurt I took my little girl in my arms and rode fast for a place of concealment. My wife was badly crippled and got upon another horse, and followed me closely.

"That day we spent in swiftest flight—using every precaution to conceal our trail. I did not know how sadly mangled my child was, but she moaned with pain and that nearly broke my heart, and yet I dared not stop. I realized how crazy I had been to bring her into this land, but my repentance came too late. At every stream I gave her water to drink and bathed her wound, but it was of no avail—she died in my arms—"

The warrior stopped abruptly. His lips quivered and his eyes were dim with memories too sad for speech. For some minutes he sat in silence, the tears rolling down his browned and wrinkled cheeks. At last he brokenly resumed.

"Friend, we buried her there in that lonely land and kept on our way. But thereafter I could not sleep. When I closed my eyes I could see my baby's little round face and feel her soft arms about my neck, and my heart was full of bitterness. I longed for revenge. My blood cried out for the death of the man whose bullet had taken her life. Each night in our homeward way my heart burned hot in my bosom, flaming with hate. It was like a live ember in my flesh.

"My woman who knew what was in my mind begged me not to return to the south—but I shut my ears to her pleading. I assembled my clan round me. I called upon those who wished to help me revenge the death of my daughter to join me. Many stepped forth and at last with a band of brave young men I swept back and fell like a whirlwind on that town.

"When I left it, only a heap of ashes could be seen. Of all who inhabited that village not one escaped me—not one." Then with a face of bronze and with biblical brevity of phrase he concluded: "*After that I slept.*"

THE REMORSE OF WAUMDISAPA

THE REMORSE OF WAUMDISAPA*

THERE was dissension in the camp of Waumdisapa. Mattowan, his cousin, jealous of his chief's great fame, was conspiring to degrade and destroy him.

Waumdisapa, called "King of the Plains" by those bordermen who knew him best, was famed throughout the valley of the Platte. Grave, dignified, serious of face and commanding of figure, he rose intellectually above all his people as his splendid body towered in the dance, a natural leader of men. His people were still living their own life, happy in their own lands, free to come and go, sweeping from north to south as the bison moved, needing nothing of the white man but his buffalo guns and his ammunition. It was in these days that women emptied the flour of their rations upon the grass in order to use the cloth of the sack, careless of the food of the paleface which was considered enervating and destructive to warriors and hunters.

Yet even in those days Waumdisapa was friendly with the traders, and like the famous Sitting Bull of the north, was only anxious to keep his people from corrupting contact with the whites, jealous to hold his lands and resolute to maintain his tribal traditions. His was the true chief's heart—all his great influence was used to maintain peace and order. He carried no weapon—save the knife with which he shaved his tobacco and cut his meat, and on his arm dangled the beaded bag in which the sacred pipe of friendship and meditation lay, and wherever he walked turmoil ceased.

For these reasons he was greatly beloved by his people. No one feared him—not even the children of the captive Ute woman who served Iapa—and yet he had gained his preëminence by virtue of great deeds as well as by strong and peaceful thoughts. He was a moving orator also—polished and graceful of utterance, conciliatory and placating at all times. Often he turned aside the venomous hand of revenge and cooled the hot heart of war. In tribal policies he was always on the side of justice.

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* A substantially true account of an incident well-known to bordermen.

Mattowan was a brave warrior, too, a man respected for his horsemanship, his skill with death-dealing weapons, and distinguished, too, for his tempestuous eloquence—but he was also feared. His hand was quick against even his brothers in council. He could not tolerate restraint. Checked now and again by Waumdisapa, he had darkened with anger, and in his heart a desire for revenge was smoldering like a hidden fire in the hollow of a great tree.

He was ambitious. "Why should Waumdisapa be chief? Am I not of equal stature, of equal fame as a warrior?" So he argued among his friends, spreading disaffection. "Waumdisapa is growing old," he sneered. "He talks for peace, for submission to the white man. His heart is no longer that of a warrior. He sits much in his tepee. It is time that he were put away."

When the chief heard these words he was very sad and very angry. He called a council at once to consider what should be done with the traitor and the whole tribe trembled with excitement and awe. What did it mean when the two most valiant men of the tribe stood face to face like angry panthers?

When the head men were assembled Waumdisapa, courteous, grave and self-contained, placed Mattowan at his left and old Mato, the hereditary chief, upon his right, and took his seat with serene countenance. Outside the council tepee the women sat upon the ground—silent, attentive, drawn closer to the speakers than they were accustomed to approach. The children, even the girl babies, crouched beside their mothers—their desire for play swallowed up in a dim sense of some impending disaster. No feast was being prepared, smiles were few and furtive. No one knew what was about to take place, but a foreboding of trouble chilled them.

The chief lighted his pipe and passed it to Mato who put it to his lips, drew a deep whiff and passed it to his neighbor. So it went slowly from man to man while Waumdisapa sat, in silence, with downcast eyes, awaiting its return.

As the pipe came to Mattowan he, the traitor, passed it by with a gesture of contempt.

The chief received it again with a steady hand, but from his lowered eye-lids a sudden flame shot. Handing the pipe to Mato he rose, and looking benignantly, yet sadly, round the circle, began very quietly:

"Brothers, the Lakotans are a great people, just and generous to their foes, faithful to the laws of their tribe. I am your chief. You all know how I became so. Some of you knew my father—he was a great warrior——"

"Aye, so he was," said Mato.

"He was a wise and good man also," continued Waumdisapa.

"Aye, aye," chorused several of the old men.

"He brought me up in the good way. He taught me to respect my elders and to honor my chief. He told me the stories of our tribe. He taught me to pray—and to shoot. He taught me to dance, to sing the ancient songs, and when I was old enough he led me to battle. My skill with the spear and the arrow I drew from him, he gave me courage and taught me forbearance. When he died you made me leader in his place and carefully have I followed his footsteps. I have kept the peace among my people. I have given of my abundance to the poor. I have not boasted or spoken enviously because my father would be ashamed of me if I did so. Now the time has come to speak plainly. I hear that my brother who sits beside me—Mattowan, the son of my mother's sister—is envious. I hear that he wishes to see me put aside as one no longer fit to rule."

He paused here and the tension was very great in all the assembly, but Mattowan sullenly looked out over the heads of the women—his big mouth close set.

The chief gently said: "This shall be as you say. If you, my brothers, head men of the Lakotans, say I am old and foolish, then Waumdisapa will put aside his chief's robes and go forth to sit outside the council circle." His voice trembled as he uttered this resolution—but drawing himself to proud height he concluded in a firm voice: "Brothers, I have spoken."

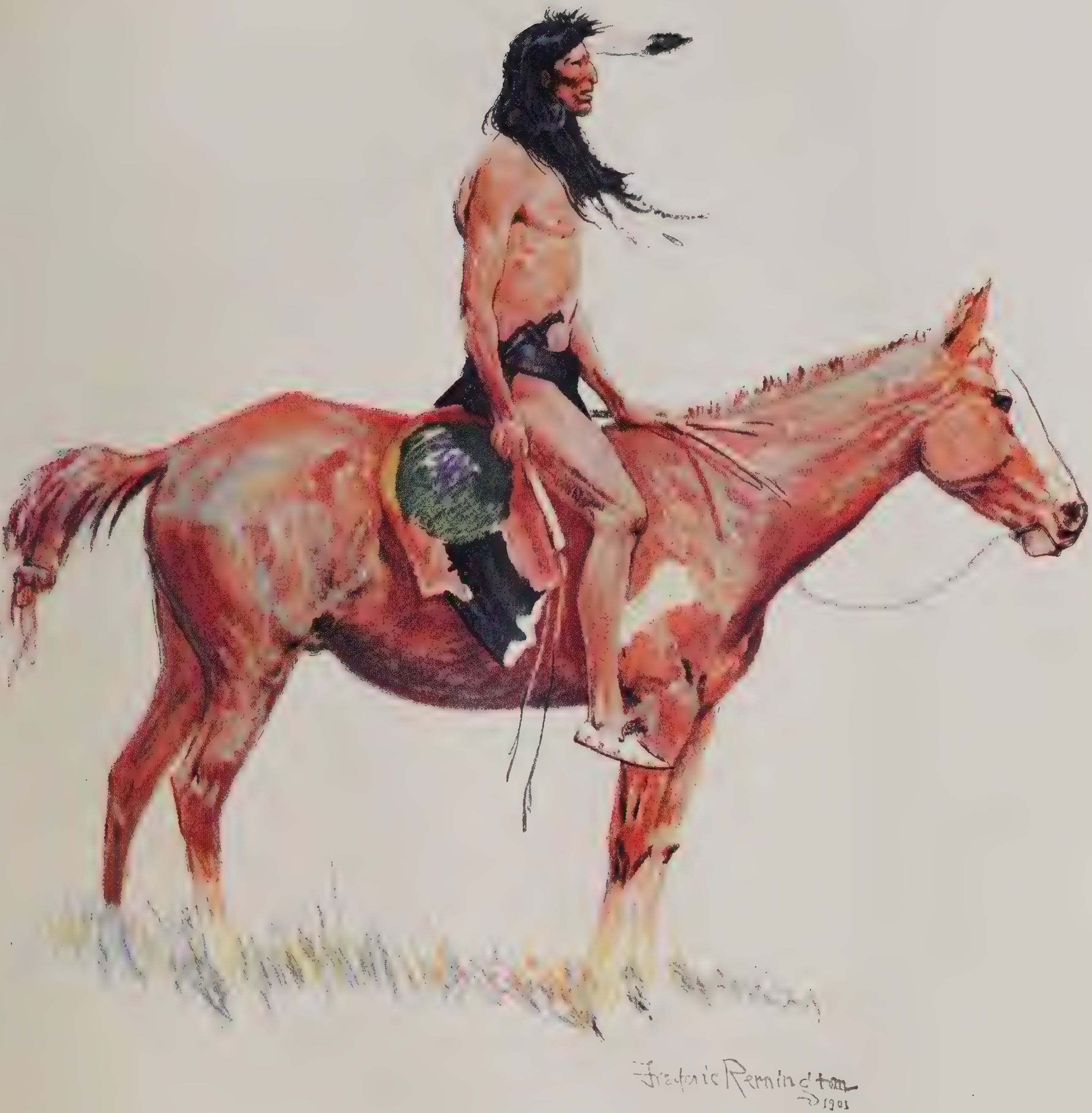
As he took his seat a low mournful sound passed among the women, and the mother of Mattowan began to sing a bitter song of reproach—but some one checked her, as old Mato rose. He was small, with the face of a fox, keen, shrewd, humorous. After the usual orator's preamble, he said: "Brothers, this is very foolish. Who desires to have Mattowan chief? Only a few boys and grumblers. What has he done to be chief? Nothing that others have not done. He is a crazy man. His heart is bad. Would he bring dissension among us? Let us rebuke this braggart. For me I am old—I sit here only by courtesy of Waumdisapa, but for me I want no change. I do not wish to make a wolf the war chief of my people. I have spoken."

As the pipe went round and one by one the head men rose to praise and defend their chieftain, Mattowan became furious. He trembled and his face grew ferocious with his almost ungovernable hate and disappointment—plainly the day was going against him.

At last he sprang up, forgetting all form—all respect. "You are all squaws," he roared. "You are dogs licking the bones this whining coward throws to you——"

He spoke no more. With the leap of a panther his chief fell upon him and with one terrible blow sunk his knife to the hilt in his heart. Smitten with instant palsy Mattowan staggered a moment amid the moans of the women, and the hoarse shouts of the men, and fell forward, face down in the very center of the council circle.

For a minute Waumdisapa, tense and terrible in his anger, stood looking down upon his fallen calumniator—rigid, menacing, ready


Frederic Remington
1901

An Indian Brave

Illustration from
A BUNCH OF BUCKSKINS
by Frederic Remington

Originally published by
R. H. Russell, *1901*

to strike again—then his vast muscles relaxed, his eyes misted with tears and with a moan of remorse and anguish he lifted his blanket till his quivering lips were covered—crying hoarsely, "I have killed my brother. I am no longer fit to be your chief."

Thereupon dropping his embroidered pipe-bag and his ceremonial fan upon the ground he turned and walked slowly away with staggering, shaking limbs, onward through the camp, out upon the plain and there, throwing himself down upon the ground, began to chant a wild song of uncontrollable grief.

All night long he lay thus, mourning like a wounded lion, and his awed people dared not approach. Over and over, with anguished voice, he cried: "Father pity me. My hand is red with my brother's blood. I have broken the bond of the council circle. My heart is black with despair!—Pity me!—My brother!"

In the morning he returned to his tepee, moving like an old man, bent and nerveless, avoiding all eyes, ignoring all greetings—and when next the council met, Waumdisapa, clad in rags, with dust upon his head, silently took his place outside the council circle—self-accused and self-deposed.

The sight of their chief moving so humbly to a seat among the obscure, deeply affected the women, and a wailing song ran among them like an autumn wind—but Waumdisapa's head was bowed to hide his quivering lips.

A DECREE OF COUNCIL

A DECREE OF COUNCIL

BIG NOSE was an inveterate gambler. Like all the plains tribes the Shi-an-nay are a social people. They love companionship and the interchange of jest and story. At evening, when the day's hunt is over, they come together to tell stories and joke and discuss each other's affairs precisely as the peasants of a French village do. And when amusement is desired they dance or play games.

It is this feeling on their part which makes it so difficult for the Government to carry out its theories of allotment. It is difficult to uproot a habit of life which has been thousands of years forming. It is next to impossible to get one of these people to leave the village group and go into his lonely little cabin a mile or two from a neighbor. And the need of amusement is intensified by the sad changes in the life of these people. Games of chance appeal to them precisely as they do to the negro and to large classes of white people. They play with the same abandon with which the negro enters into a game of craps.

One evening Big Nose was in company with three or four others in the midst of Charcoal's camp playing The Hand game. He had been doing some work for the Post and had brought with him to the camp a little heap of silver dollars. He was therefore in excellent temper for a brisk game. But luck was against him. His little store of money melted away and then he began taking his ponies, his gun, and finally his blankets and his tepee; all went into the yawning gulf of his bad luck. Before midnight came he had staked everything but the clothing on his back and had reached a condition of mind bordering on frenzy.

Nothing was too small for his opponents to accept and nothing was too valuable for him to stake. He began putting his moccasins up on the chance and ended by tearing off his Gee string which represented his absolute impoverishment. A reasonable being would have ended the game here but with a desperation hitherto unknown to the gamblers of his tribe, he sat naked on the ground and gambled both his wives away.

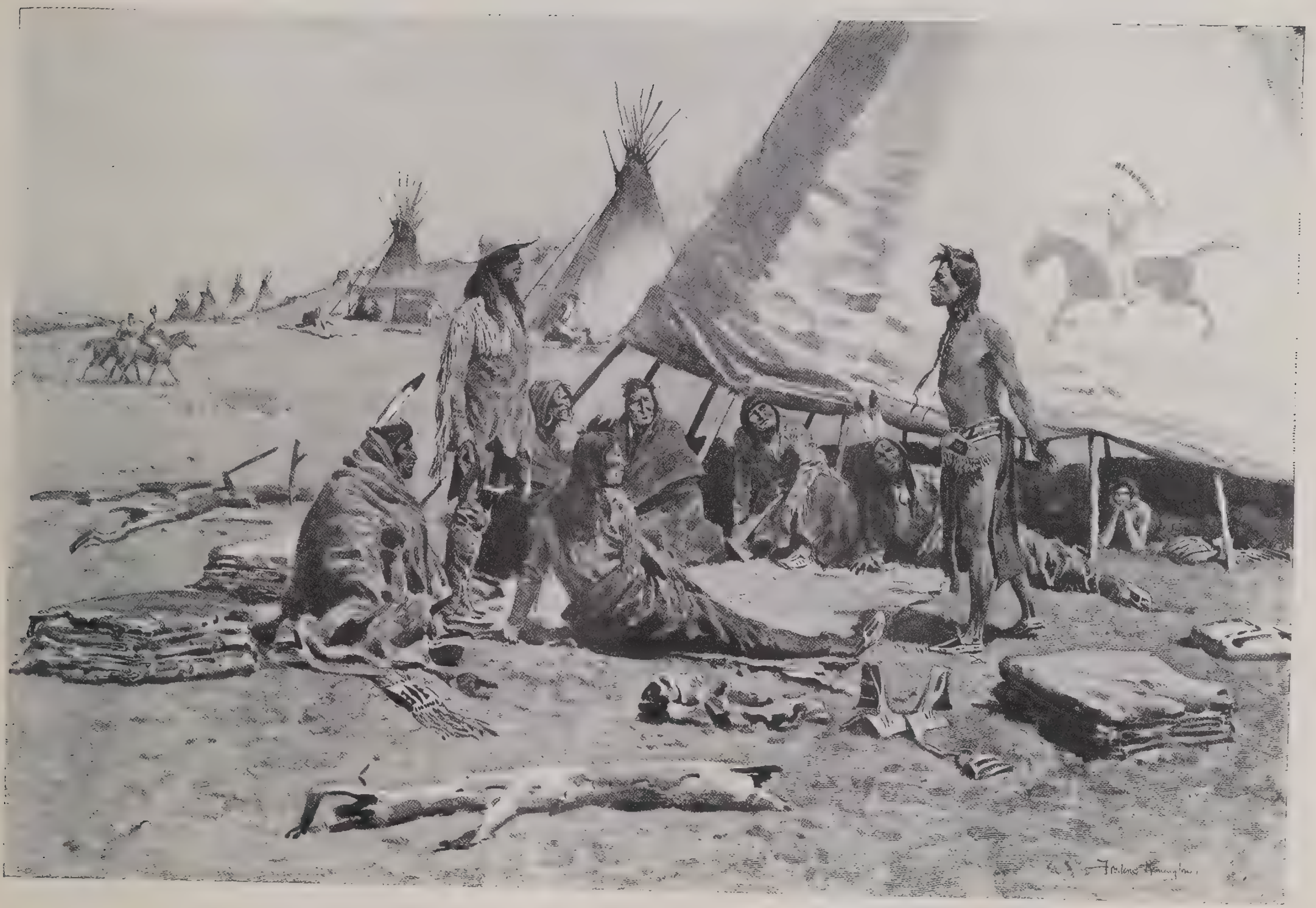
When he realized what had happened to him, that he was absolutely without home or substance in the world, naked to the cold and having no claim upon a human being, his frenzy left him and he sank into pitiful dejection. Walking naked through the camp, he began to cry his need, "Take pity on me, my friends. I have nothing. The wind is cold. I have no blanket. I am hungry. I have no tepee."

For a long time no one paid any heed to him, for they were disgusted with his foolishness and they would not allow his wives to clothe him or give him shelter. However, at last, his brother came out and gave him a blanket and took him into his tepee. "Let this be a lesson to you," he said. "You are a fool. Yet I pity you."

Next day a council was called to consider his case, which was the most remarkable that had ever happened in the tribe. There were many who were in favor of letting him take care of himself, but in the end it was decreed that he should be clothed and that he should have a tepee and the absolute necessities of life.

The question of restoring him to his wives was a much more serious one, the general opinion being that a man who would gamble his wives away in this way had no further claim upon a woman.

At last, old Charcoal arose to speak. He was a waggish old fellow whose eye twinkled with humor as he said, "Big Nose has two wives as you know. One of them is young. She is industrious. She is very quiet, saying little and speaking in a gentle voice. The other is old and has a sharp tongue. Her tongue is like a whip. It

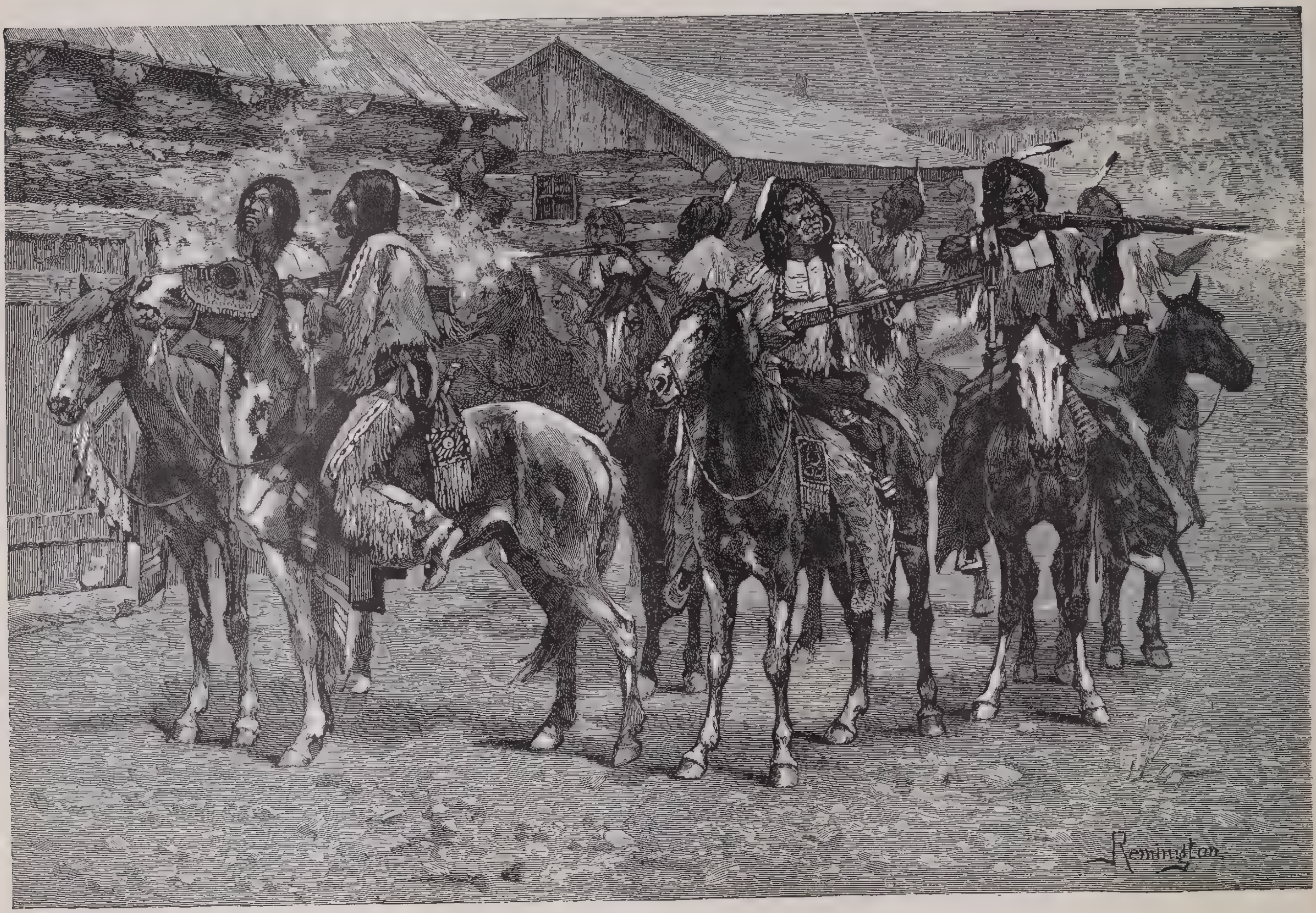

Frederic Remington.

In an Indian Camp

The two men standing are in argument about the squaw seated between them, for the possession of whom they had gambled, the brave in the breech-clout, although the loser, refusing, in Indian parlance, "to put the woman on the blanket."

Illustration from
SUN-DOWN LEFLARE'S WARM SPOT
by Frederic Remington

Originally published in
HARPER'S MAGAZINE, *September, 1898*



Crow Indians Firing into the Agency

This incident occurred in 1887 on the Crow Reservation in Northern Montana. A score or so of young Crow braves having captured sixty horses in a raid they made on a Piegan camp, were wildly celebrating the victory when the agent sought to arrest them with his force of Indian police. Upon this the raiders assumed a hostile attitude and as a defiance they began firing into the agency buildings.

Illustration from
THE TURBULENT CROWS

Originally published in
HARPER'S WEEKLY, *November 5, 1887*

makes her husband smart. Now let us restore him to his old wife. She will be good discipline for him. She will not let him forget what he has done."

This suggestion made every one laugh and it was agreed with. And the news was carried to Big Nose. "I don't want my old wife," he said. "I want my young wife."

"The council has decreed," was the stern answer, "and there is no appeal."

Big Nose accepted the ruling of the tribe and resolutely turned his face in the right direction. He gave up gambling and became one of the most progressive men of the tribe. By hard work he acquired a team and a wagon and worked well, freighting for the Agency and for the Post traders.

His old wife, however, grew more and more unsatisfactory as the years went by. For some inscrutable reason, she did not care to make a home, but was always moving about from camp to camp, full of gossip and unwelcome criticism. All this Big Nose patiently endured for four years. But one day he came to Seger, the superintendent of the school near him, and said:

"My friend, you know I am walking the white man's road. You see that I want to do right. I have a team. I work hard. I want a home where I can live quietly. But my old wife is trifling. She is good for nothing. She wants to gad about all the time and never stay home and look after the chickens. I want to put her away and take another and better wife."

Seger was very cautious. "What do the old chiefs say about it?"

Big Nose looked a little discouraged, but he answered defiantly, "Oh, I am walking the white man's road these days. I don't care what they say. I am listening to what you say."

"I'll consider the matter," he replied evasively, for he wished to consult the head men. When he had stated the matter to White Shield, he said, "Now, of course, whatever you think best in this matter will be acceptable. I don't know anything about the circumstances, but if this old woman is as bad as Big Nose says, she is of no account."

White Shield, very quietly, replied, "Big Nose can never marry again."

"Why not?" inquired Seger, being interested in White Shield's brevity and decision of utterance.

White Shield replied, "Haven't you heard how Big Nose gambled his wives away? That thing he did. Gambled away his tepees, his clothing, and walked naked through the camp. We gave him clothes. We gave back one wife, but we marked out a road and he must walk in it. He cannot marry again."

And from this decree there was no appeal.

DRIFTING CRANE

DRIFTING CRANE

THE people of Boomtown invariably spoke of Henry Wilson as the oldest settler in the Jim Valley, as he was of Buster County, but the Eastern man, with his ideas of an "old settler," was surprised as he met the short, silent, middle-aged man, who was very loath to tell anything about himself, and about whom many strange and thrilling stories were told.

Between his ranch and the settlements in Eastern Dakota there was the wedge-shaped reservation known as the Sisseton Indian Reserve, on which were stationed the customary agency and company of soldiers. The valley was unsurveyed for the most part, and the Indians naturally felt a sort of proprietorship in it, and when Wilson drove his cattle down into the valley and squatted, the chief, Drifting Crane, welcomed him, as a host might, to an abundant feast whose hospitality was presumed upon, but who felt the need of sustaining his reputation for generosity, and submitted graciously.

The Indians during the first summer got to know Wilson, and liked him for his silence, his courage, his simplicity; but the older men pondered upon the matter a great deal and watched with grave faces to see him ploughing up the sod for his garden. There was something strange in this solitary man thus deserting his kindred, coming here to live alone with his cattle; they could not understand it. What they said in those pathetic, dimly lighted lodges will never be known; but when winter came, and the newcomer did not drive his cattle back over the hills as they thought he would, then the old chieftains took long counsel upon it. Night after night they smoked upon it, and at last Drifting Crane said to two of his young men: "Go ask this cattleman why he remains in the cold and snow with his cattle. Ask him why he does not drive his cattle home."

This was in March, and one evening a couple of days later, as Wilson was about re-entering his shanty at the close of his day's work, he was confronted by two stalwart Indians, who greeted him pleasantly.

"How d'e do?" he said in reply. "Come in."

The Indians entered and sat silently while he put some food on the table. They hardly spoke till after they had eaten. The Indian is always hungry, for the reason that his food supply is insufficient and his clothing poor. When they sat on the cracker-boxes and soap-boxes which served as seats, they spoke They told him of the chieftain's message. They said they had come to assist him in driving his cattle back across the hills; that he must go.

To all this talk in the Indian's epigrammatic way, and in the dialect which has never been written, the rancher replied almost as briefly: "You go back and tell Drifting Crane that I like this place; that I'm here to stay; that I don't want any help to drive my cattle. I'm on the lands of the Great Father at Washington, and Drifting Crane ain't got any say about it. Now that sizes the whole thing up. I ain't got anything against you nor against him, but I'm a settler; that's my constitution; and now I'm settled I'm going to stay."

While the Indians discussed his words between themselves he made a bed of blankets on the floor, and said: "I never turn anybody out. A white man is just as good as an Indian as long as he behaves himself as well. You can bunk here."

In the morning he gave them as good a breakfast as he had,—bacon and potatoes, with coffee and crackers. Then he shook hands, saying: "Come again. I ain't got anything against you; you've done y'r duty. Now go back and tell your chief what I've said. I'm at home every day. Good day."

The Indians smiled kindly, and drawing their blankets over their arms, went away toward the east.

During April and May two or three reconnoitering parties of land-hunters drifted over the hills and found him out. He was glad to see them, for, to tell the truth, the solitude of his life was telling on him. The winter had been severe, and he had hardly caught a glimpse of a white face during the three midwinter months, and his provisions were scanty.

These parties brought great news. One of them was the advance surveying party for a great Northern railroad, and they said a line of road was to be surveyed during the summer if their report was favorable.

"Well, what d'ye think of it?" Wilson asked, with a smile.

"Think! It's immense!" said a small man in the party, whom the rest called Judge Balser. "Why, they'll be a town of four thousand inhabitants in this valley before snow flies. We'll send the surveyors right over the divide next month."

They sent some papers to Wilson a few weeks later, which he devoured as a hungry dog might devour a plate of bacon. The papers were full of the wonderful resources of the Jim Valley. It spoke of the nutritious grasses for stock. It spoke of the successful venture of the lonely settler Wilson, how his stock fattened upon the winter grasses without shelter, what vegetables he grew, etc.

Wilson was reading this paper for the sixth time one evening in May. He felt something touch him on the shoulder, and looked up to see a tall Indian gazing down upon him with a look of strange pride and gravity. Wilson sprang to his feet and held out his hand.

"Drifting Crane, how d'e do?"

The Indian bowed, but did not take the settler's hand. Drifting Crane would have been called old if he had been a white man, and there was a look of age in the fixed lines of his powerful, strongly modeled face, but no suspicion of weakness in the splendid poise of his broad, muscular body. There was a smileless gravity about his lips and eyes which was very impressive.

"I'm glad to see you. Come in and get something to eat," said Wilson, after a moment's pause.

The chief entered the cabin and took a seat near the door. He took a cup of milk and some meat and bread silently, and ate while listening to the talk of the settler.

"I don't brag on my biscuits, chief, but they *eat*, if a man is hungry. An' the milk's all right. I suppose you've come to see why I ain't moseying back over the divide?"

The chief, after a long pause, began to speak in a low, slow voice, as if choosing his words. He spoke in broken English, of course, but his speech was very direct and plain and had none of these absurd figures of rhetoric which romancers invariably put into the mouths of Indians. His voice was almost lionlike in its depth, and yet was not unpleasant.

"Cattleman, my young men brought me bad message from you. They brought your words to me, saying, he will not go away."

"That's about the way the thing stands," replied Wilson, in response to the question that was in the old chief's steady eyes. "I'm here to stay. This ain't your land; this is Uncle Sam's land, and part of it'll be mine as soon as the surveyors come to measure it off."

"Who gave it away?" asked the chief. "My people were cheated out of it; they didn't know what they were doing."

"I can't help that; that's for Congress to say. That's the business of the Great Father at Washington."

There was a look of deep sorrow in the old man's face. At last he spoke again: "The cattleman is welcome; but he must go, because whenever one white man goes and calls it good, the others come. Drifting Crane has seen it far in the east twice. The white men come thick as the grass. They tear up the sod. They build houses. They scare the buffalo away. They spoil my young men with whisky. Already they begin to climb the eastern hills. Soon they will fill the valley, and Drifting Crane and his people will be surrounded. The sod will all be black."

"I hope you're right," was the rancher's grim reply.

"But they will not come if the cattleman go back to say the water is not good, there is no grass, and the Indians own the land."

Wilson smiled at the childish faith of the chief. "Won't do, chief—won't do. That won't do any good. I might as well stay."

The chief rose. He was touched by the settler's laugh; his eyes flashed; his voice took on a sterner note. "The white man *must* go!"

Wilson rose also. He was not a large man, but he was a very resolute one. "I shan't go," he said through his clenched teeth.

It was a thrilling, a significant scene. It was in absolute truth the meeting of the modern vidette of civilization with one of the rear guard of retreating barbarism. Each man was a type; each was wrong, and each was right. The Indian as true and noble from the barbaric point of view as the white man. He was a warrior and hunter; made so by circumstances over which he had no control.

The settler represented the unflagging energy and fearless heart of the American pioneer. Narrow-minded, partly brutalized by hard labor and a lonely life, yet an admirable figure for all that. As he looked into the Indian's face he seemed to grow in height. He felt behind him all the weight of the millions of westward-moving settlers; he stood the representative of an unborn state. He took down a rifle from the wall, the magazine rifle, most modern of guns; he patted the stock, pulled the crank, throwing a shell into view.

"You know this thing, chief?"

The Indian nodded slightly.

"Well, I'll go when—this—is—empty."

"But my young men are many."

"So are the white men—my brothers."

The chief's head dropped forward. Wilson, ashamed of his boasting, put the rifle back on the wall.

"I'm not here to fight. You can kill me any time. You could 'a' killed me to-night, but it wouldn't do any good. It 'ud only make it worse for you. Why, they'll be a town in here bigger'n all your tribe before two grass from now. It ain't no use, Drifting Crane; it's *got* to be. You an' I can't help n'r hinder it."

Drifting Crane turned his head and gazed out on the western sky, still red with the light of the fallen sun. His face was rigid as bronze, but there was a dreaming, prophetic look in his eyes. A lump came into the settler's throat; for the first time in his life he got a glimpse of the infinite despair of the Indian. He forgot that Drifting Crane was the representative of a "vagabond race"; he saw in him, or rather *felt* in him, something almost magnetic. He was a *man;* and a man of sorrows. The settler's voice was husky when he spoke again, and his lips trembled.

"Chief, I'd go to-morrow if it 'ud do any good, but it won't —not a particle. You know that when you stop to think a minute. What good did it do to massa*cree* all them settlers at New Ulm? What good will it do to murder me and a hundred others? Not a bit. A thousand others would take our places. So I might just as well stay, and we might just as well keep good friends. Killin' is out o' fashion; don't do any good."

There was a twitching about the stern mouth of the Indian chief. He understood all too well the irresistible logic of the pioneer. He kept his martial attitude, but his broad chest heaved painfully, and his eyes grew dim. At last he said, "Good-by. Cattleman right; Drifting Crane wrong. Shake hands. Good-by." He turned and strode away.

"This is all wrong," muttered the settler. "There's land enough for us all, or ought to be. I don't understand— Well, I'll leave it to Uncle Sam, anyway." He ended with a sigh.

THE STORY OF HOWLING WOLF

THE STORY OF HOWLING WOLF

WITHIN two weeks after Captain Cook took charge of the Snake River Agency his native policemen reported that fifteen of his people had crossed the reservation line on their way to the Wind River Country.

"Where have they gone?"

"They gone to see it—their Ghost Dance Saviour," explained Claude, the agency interpreter.

"Who have gone?"

Claude rapidly ran over the names, and ended with "Howling Wolf."

"Howling Wolf? Who is he? He isn't on the rolls. I don't know anything about him."

"He head man of Lizard Creek Camp."

"Why isn't he on the rolls?"

"He don't get it—no rations."

"Why not?"

"He is angry."

"Angry? What about?"

Out of a good deal of talk the agent secured this story. Seven years before, a brother of Howling Wolf, a peaceful old man, was sitting on a hilltop (near the road) wrapped in evening meditation. His back was toward a white man's cabin not far away and he was looking at the sunset. His robe was drawn closely round him, and his heart was at peace with all the world, for he was thinking that the way is short between him and the Shadow Land.

A couple of cowboys came out of the door of the cabin and one pointed at the meditating man with derisive gestures. The other drew his revolver and said, "See me knock the hat off the old fool."

As he fired the old man sprang to his feet with a convulsive leap, the blood streaming over his face. Numbed by the shock and blinded with his own blood, he ran frenziedly and without design toward the miscreant who shot him, and so on over the hill toward Howling Wolf's camp.

Springing to their horses the two ruffians galloped away with desperate haste.

It was well they did so, for an hour later nothing remained of the ranch but a heap of smoking embers. A hundred angry red men had swept back over the hill—swift to avenge the madness of old Medicine Crow.

The old man was not killed, he lived for more than a year after the wound, but he was never quite himself and when he died Howling Wolf made a solemn declaration of war against the white cattlemen and could not be convinced that the cowboys meant merely to frighten and not to kill his brother. He lived in the hope of some time meeting those men. No one had seen them but David Big Nose, who had been to the white settlement that day, had met the fugitives, and was able to describe them very well and every word of his description burned itself into Howling Wolf's memory. Thereafter on all his excursions among the whites his eyes were ever seeking, his ears ever listening. He never for an instant lost hope of revenge.

He withdrew from all friendly association with the whites. He was sullen, difficult to deal with and in the end became a powerful influence in checking the progress of the Shi-an-nay along the white man's road. The agent took little pains to help him clear away his doubts and hates, and so it was that Claude, the interpreter, ended by saying, "and so Howling Wolf no send children to school—no take it rations, and never comes to agency—never."

Captain Cook sat down and wrote a telegram to the agent of the Sho-sho-nee, saying, "Fifteen of my people are gone without leave to visit the Messiah. If they come into your reservation arrest them and send them back at once."

Some days later the Wind River agent replied: "Eleven of your Indians came in here—I've sent them home. Four went round me to the west. Probably they have gone into the Twin Lake Country, where the Messiah is said to be."

Some weeks later Big Bear, the policeman, came in with the second announcement, "Howling Wolf come."

"You tell Howling Wolf I want to see him," said Cook. "Tell him I want to talk with him, say to him I am his friend and that I want to talk things over."

Two days later, as he sat at his desk in his inner office, the captain heard the door open and close, and when he looked up, a tall, handsome but very sullen red man was looking down upon him.

"How!" called Cook, pleasantly, extending his hand.

The visitor remained as motionless as a bronze statue of hate, his arms folded, his figure menacing. His eyes seemed to search the soul of the man before him.

"How—*how!*" called Cook again. "Are you deaf? What's the matter with you? How!"

At this the chief seized the agent's hand and began shaking it violently, viciously. It was his crippled arm and Cook was soon tired of this horseplay.

"That'll do, stop it! Stop it, I say. Stop it or by the Lord I'll smash your face," he cried, seizing a heavy glass inkstand. He was about to strike his tormentor, when the red man dropped his hand.

Angry and short of breath the agent stepped to the door.

"Claude, come in here. Who is this man? What's the matter with him?"

"That Howling Wolf," replied the interpreter, with evident fear.

Cook was enlightened. He turned with a beaming smile. "Howling Wolf, how de do? I'm glad to see you." And then to Claude: "You tell him my arm is sick and he mustn't be so hearty with his greetings. Tell him I want to have a long talk with him right off—but I've got some papers to sign and I can't do it now. Tell him to come to-morrow morning."

They shook hands again, ceremoniously this time, and Howling Wolf withdrew in dignified reserve.

After he went away Cook informed himself thoroughly concerning the former agent's treatment of Howling Wolf and was ready next morning for a conference.

As he walked into the yard about nine o'clock the agent found fifteen or twenty young men of Howling Wolf's faction lounging about the door of the office. They were come to see that their leader was not abused—at least such was Cook's inference.

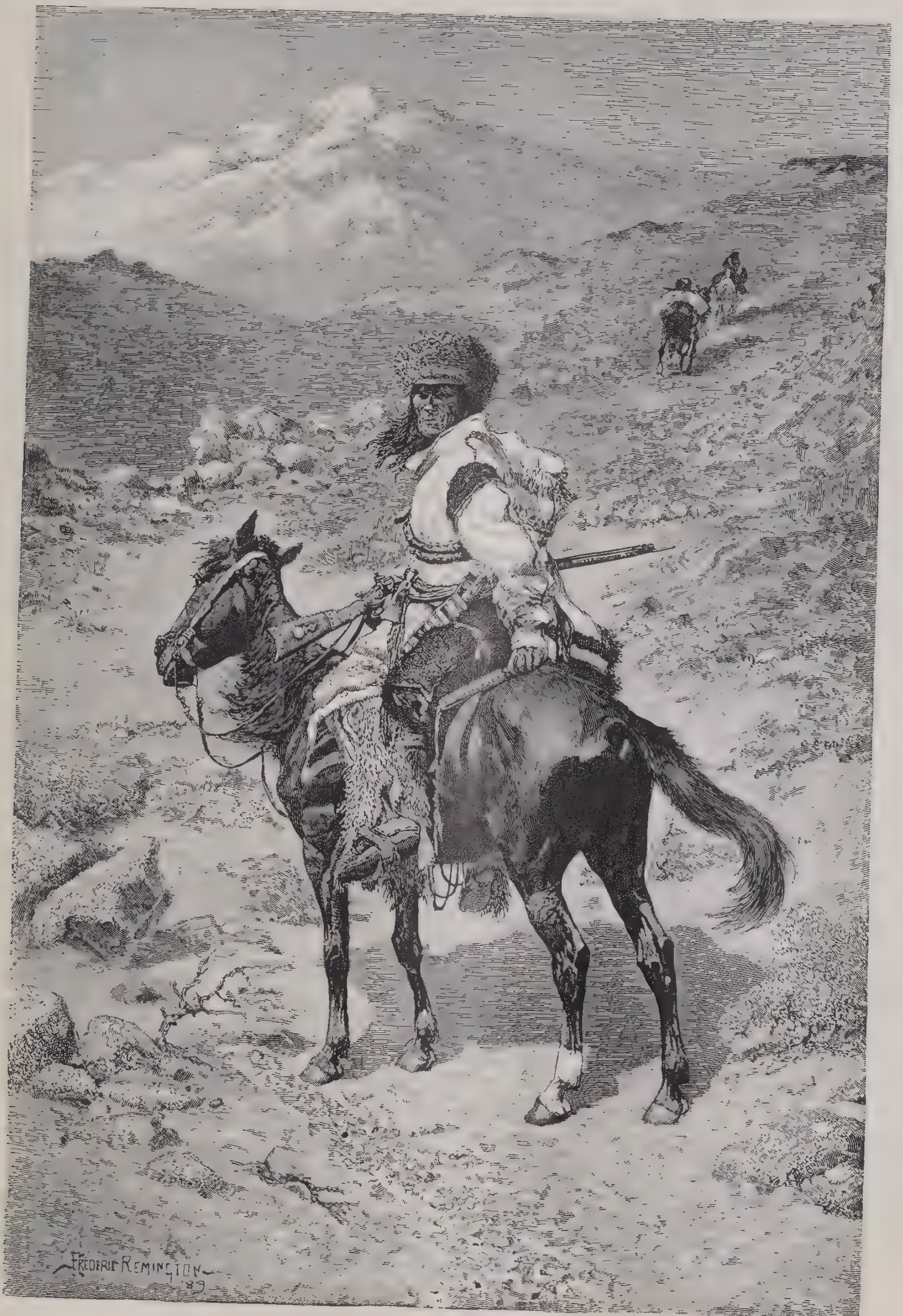
He was irritated but did not show it. "Go out of the yard!" he said quietly. "I don't want you here. Claude will tell you all you want to know." He insisted and, though they scowled sullenly, they obeyed, for he laid his open palm on the breast of the tallest of them and pushed him to the gate. "Come, go out—you've no business here."

Claude was shaking with fear, but regained composure as the young men withdrew.

As they faced Howling Wolf in the inner office, Cook said, "Well now, Wolf, I want you tell me just what is the matter? I am your friend and the friend of all your people. I am a soldier and a soldier does his duty. My duty is to see that you get your rations and that no one harms you. Now what is the trouble?"

Howling Wolf mused a while and then began to recount his grievances one by one. His story was almost exactly as it had been reported by others.

The other agent had sworn at him and once had kicked at him—"for which I will kill him"—he added with quiet menace. "He

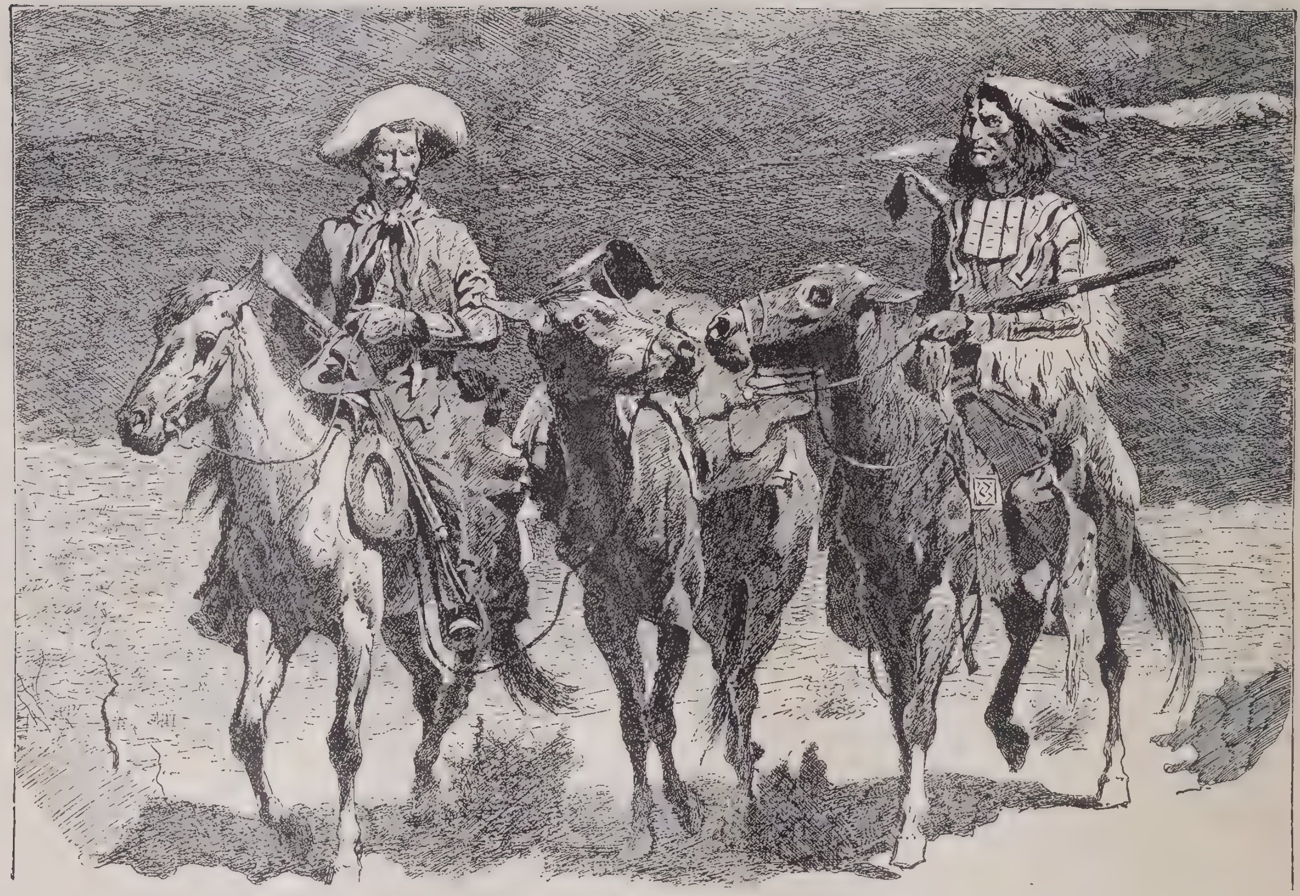


An Indian Trapper

This Indian trapper depicted by Remington may be a Cree, or perhaps a Blackfoot, whom one was apt to run across in the Selkirk Mountains, or elsewhere on the plains of the British Territory, or well up north in the Rockies, toward the outbreak of the Civil War.

Illustration from
SOME AMERICAN RIDERS
by Colonel Theodore Ayrault Dodge, U.S.A.

Originally published in
HARPER'S MAGAZINE, *May, 1891*



A Questionable Companionship

In frontier days when the white man and the Indian met on a lonely trail it was natural for them to watch each other with suspicion as they rode side by side. To both the companionship seemed questionable, until finally some words of the red man convinced the white man that his companion was trustworthy. After that there were a sharing of food or water or tobacco and an admixture of comfort to the companionship.

Illustration from
A QUESTIONABLE COMPANIONSHIP

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has tried to steal away my children to teach them white man's ways. I don't want them to learn white man's ways. White man lie, and steal and quarrel. Then the agent cut off my rations which are a part of our treaty and I was hungry. For all this I am angry at white men."

When he had finished the agent said, "You're all wrong, Howling Wolf. Some white men are bad, but many are good and want to do the Indian good. I am one of those who are set aside by the Great Father to see that your rights are secured. You may depend on me. Go ask Red Beard, Wolf Voice, or White Calf, they will tell you the kind of man I am. I'm going to be your friend whether you are my friend or not. I want you to come and see me. I want you to draw your rations and be friends with me. Will you do it? I want you to think about this to-night and come and see me again."

For fully five minutes Howling Wolf sat thinking deeply with his eyes on the floor. His lips twitched occasionally and his broad breast heaved with profound emotion. It was hard to trust the white man even when he smiled, for his tongue had ever been forked like the rattlesnake and his hand exceedingly cunning. His deeds also were mysterious. Out of the east he came and monstrous things followed him—canoes that belched flame and thunder, iron horses that drew huge wagons, with a noise like a whirlwind. They brought plows that tore the sod, machines that swept away the grass. Their skill was diabolical. They all said, "dam Injun," and in those words displayed their hearts. They desolated, uprooted and transformed. They made the red men seem like children and weak women by their necromancy. Was there no end to their coming? Was there no clear sky behind this storm? What mighty power pushed them forward?

And yet they brought good things. They brought sugar and flour and strange fruits. They knew how to make pleasant drinks and to raise many grains. They were not all bad. They were like a rainstorm which does much harm and great good also. Besides, here was this smiling man, his agent, waiting to hear what he had to say.

At last he was able to look up, and though he did not smile, his face was no longer sullen. He rose and extended his hand. "I will do as you say. I will go home and think. I will come to see you again and I will tell you all my mind."

When he came two days later he met the agent with a smile. "How! My friend—How!" he said pleasantly.

The agent took him to his inner office where none might hear and made the sign "Be seated."

Howling Wolf sat down and began by saying, "I could not come yesterday, for I had not yet finished thinking over your words. When night came I did as you said. I lay alone in my tepee looking up at a star just above and my thoughts were deep and calm. You are right, Howling Wolf is wrong. Nobody ever explained these things to me before. All white men said, 'Go here,' 'Do that,' 'Don't go there,' 'Don't do that,'—they never explained and I did not understand their reasons for doing so. No white man ever shook hands with me like a friend. They all said, 'Dam Injun'—all Shi-an-nay know those words. You are not so. You are a just man—everybody tells me so. I am glad of this. It makes my heart warm and well. I have taken on hope for my people once more. I had a heart of hate toward all the white race—now all that is gone. It is buried deep under the ground. I want to be friends with all the world and I want you to make me a paper—will you do it?"

"Certainly," replied the agent. "What shall it be?"

The old man rose and with deep solemnity dictated these words to be mysteriously recorded in the white man's wonderful tablet:

"Say this: I am Howling Wolf. Long I hated the white man. Now my heart is good and I want to make friends with all white men. I want to work with a plow and live in a house like the white man. These are my words. Howling Wolf."

To this the old man put his sign: and as he folded the paper and put it away in his pouch, he said, "This shall be a sign to all men. This paper I will show to all Shi-an-nay and to all the white men. It will tell them that my heart is made good."

And he went out with the glow of good cheer upon his face.

II

Now Howling Wolf was a chief. He had never lifted a heavy burden in his life—though others of the Shi-an-nay came often to the Agency farmer for work. They enjoyed freighting and whenever there were hides to go to the distant railway or goods to be fetched, the agent employed them and, though their ponies were small and shifty, they managed, nevertheless, to do creditable work with them. They cut wood and made hay and mended bridges cunningly and well. Howling Wolf had kept away from all this work. He did not believe in it.

Two days after his talk with the agent the clerk was amazed to see Howling Wolf drive down to the warehouse to secure a load of hides. He had no wagon of his own, but he had hired one of his son-in-law, Painted Feather, and was prepared to do his share. In the glow of his new peace he wished to do more than his share. He helped everybody to load and waited till the last, willing to take what was left.

The agent, hearing of this zeal of his convert, came down to see him and smilingly asked, "Why work so hard, Howling Wolf?"

"I will tell you," said Howling Wolf. "In my evil days I took no part in making the fences and laying the bridges—now I want to catch up. Therefore I must work twice as hard as anyone else."

"Howling Wolf, you do me honor," said the agent. "I shake your hand. You are now safely on the white man's road."

To this Howling Wolf only said, "My heart is very good to-day. I am happy and I go to see the white man's big camp. I shall keep my eyes open and learn many good things."

The teams laden with their skins had just passed the big red jaws of Bitterwood Cañon when a party of cowboys overtook them.

"Hello there," yelled one big fellow. "Where you going with those hides?"

Howling Wolf heard the curses, but his heart was soft with newborn love for his enemies and he smilingly greeted his foes. "How! how!"

"See the old seed grin. Let's shoot him up a few and see him hustle."

"Oh come along, let 'em alone, Bill," said one of the other men.

"That's old Howling Wolf," put in the third man. "Better let him be. He's a fighter."

"Are you old Howling Wolf?" asked Bill, riding alongside.

Howling Wolf nodded and smiled again—though he understood only his name.

"Fighter, are you?" queried the cowboy "Eat men up—hey?"

"How, how!" repeated the old man as pleasantly as he was able, though his eyes were growing stern.

"I'd like to hand him out a package just for luck. He's too good-natured. What say?"

"Oh, come along Bill," urged his companions. As they rode by the next wagon, wherein sat a younger man, Bill called out, "Get out o' the road!"

"Go to hell!" replied the driver, Harry Turtle, a Carlisle student. "You are a big fool."

Bill drew his revolver and spurred his horse against Harry's off pony and bawled, "I'd cut your hide into strips for a cent!"

Harry rose in his wagon and uttered a cry of warning which stopped every team, and his eyes flamed in hot anger. "You go!" he said, "or we will kill you." The cowboys drew off, Brindle Bill belching imprecations, but his companions were genuinely alarmed and rode between him and the wagons and in this way prevented an outbreak. Howling Wolf reproved young Turtle and said: "Do not make any reply to them. We must be careful not to anger the white men."

They reached the railway safely and, having unloaded their freight, went into camp about a half mile from the town on the river flat beneath some cottonwood trees.

To every white man that spoke to him Howling Wolf replied pleasantly and was very happy to think he was serving the agent and also earning some money. The citizens were generally contemptuous of him, and some of them refused his extended hand, but he did not lay that up against them. It had been long since he had seen a white man's town and he was vastly interested in everything. He was amazed at the stores of blankets and saddles and calico which he saw. He looked at the gayly painted wagons with envy, for he had no wagon of his own and he saw that to travel on the white man's road a wagon was necessary. He looked at harnesses also with covetous eyes. Every least thing had value to him, the pictures on the fences, on the peach cans, on the tobacco boxes, the pumps, the horse troughs and fountains—nothing escaped his eager eyes. He was like a boy again.

He was standing before a shop window lost in the attempt to understand the use of all the marvelous things he saw there, when a saloon door opened and a party of loud-talking white men came out. He turned his head quickly and perceived the three cowboys who had passed him on the road. They recognized him also and their leader swaggered up to him, made reckless with drink, and began to abuse him.

"So you're Howling Wolf, are ye? Big chief. Drink blood. Why I'd break you in two pieces for a leatherette. I'm Brindle Bill, you understand, I'd a killed you on the road only ——"

Howling Wolf again understood only the curses, but he turned a calm face upon his enemy and extended his hand. "How? How, white man?"

Bill spat into his hand.

Quick as a flash Howling Wolf slapped the ruffian's face. "Coyote!" he cried in his own tongue.

The cowboy jerked his revolver from its holster, but Howling Wolf leaped behind a signpost and the bullet, going wild, glanced from an iron rod and entered the knee of a man who stood in the doorway of the saloon. With a scream of terror he fell flat on the walk as if killed.

Instantly the peaceful street became a place of savage outcry.

"Kill him! Kill the red devil!" shouted a dozen who knew nothing of what had happened, except that a man was shot and an Indian was present.

Like a bear at bay, Howling Wolf faced his hereditary enemies. "I am peaceful. I have done nothing," he called, jerking a paper from his pocket. "See, this is true, read it!"

The paper saved his life, for all were curious to see what this long official envelope contained. It occurred to one of the men in the circle to investigate.

"Hold on, boys! Wait a minute! This may be a courier. Be quiet now till I see."

He took the envelope and opened the paper while the crowd waited. "Read it Lannon."

Lannon read in a loud voice: "*I am Howling Wolf. Long I hated the white man. Now my heart is good.*"

A burst of derisive laughter interrupted the reader.

"Oh, is it!"

"Kill the old fool for luck!"

"Lynch him."

But, though they laughed at it, the letter cooled the excitement of the crowd, and when the sheriff came he had no trouble in arresting Howling Wolf, who went willingly, for he feared for his life in the face of the crowd in the street—which grew greater each moment.

He recoiled sharply as they came to the door of the jail. He knew what that meant. "I will not go!" he said. "Why do you put me in there? I have done nothing."

The sheriff, ready to make capital for himself in the eyes of the mob which had followed him, put his revolver to his captive's head and said brutally:

"Git in there or I'll blow your head off."

Wolf understood the man's action, and, fearing the crowd which followed, submitted to be pushed into the cell and was locked in. He still held in his hand the document which had been contemptuously thrust back upon him, and now sat half-stunned by the sudden fury of the white men toward him. That the three cowboys should make trouble did not surprise him—but that all the white men should run toward him with angry faces and armed fists appalled and embittered him. Perhaps there were only a few friendly white men after all. Perhaps the agent was mistaken and the Shi-an-nay must war to the death with these infuriated cattlemen.

"I did wrong to come here," he thought. "I should have remained deep in my own country among the rocks and the coyotes. I have put myself into the hands of my deadly enemies. I shall die here alone, because I have been a child and have listened to sweet words."

Meanwhile grossly distorted accounts of the affair passed from saloon to barber shop and at last it took this shape: "A gang of drunken reds had struck Hank Kelly for a drink and when he refused one of them shot him in the stomach. All escaped but one, old Howling Wolf, one of the worst old reprobates that ever lived. He ought to be lynched and we'll do it yet."

Bill the cowboy was a hero. He swaggered about saying, "I had him in a hole. I winged him so't sheriff had him easy."

Ultimately he grew too drunk to throw any light on the subject at all and his companions took him and fled the town, leaving Howling Wolf to bear the weight of the investigation.

Harry Turtle went to the sheriff and said abruptly: "I want see Howling Wolf."

"You can't see him," replied the sheriff.

"Why can't I see him?"

"Because I say so. Get out o' here . . . The whole tribe of ye ought to be wiped out. Git—or I'll put you where the dogs can eat ye."

Turtle went away with a face dark with anger. He said to his companions, "I must go back to the agent at once to tell him what has happened. You better all keep together with me so if the cowboys try to kill us we can defend ourselves. Come, let us go."

They went out into the darkness and traveled all night very hard, and when morning came they were out of danger.

When Turtle entered the agent's office late next day he showed little sign of what he had been through.

"Hello, Harry, I thought you went to town?"

"I did. I got back. Heap trouble come."

"What's matter?"

"Cowboy fight Howling Wolf—Howling Wolf fight, too. White man get killed. Howling Wolf in calaboose. I come quick to tell you."

Cook grew grave. "Is that so, where are the other men?"

"Outside."

"Bring 'em in, Claude," he said to his interpreter. "You talk with these people and find out what it is all about."

In the end he ordered his team and with Claude drove away to town, a long, hard, dusty road. He reached the hotel that night too late to call on the sheriff and was forced to wait till morning. The little rag of a daily paper had used the shooting as a text for its well-worn discourse. "Sweep these marauding fiends out of the State or off the face of the earth," it said editorially. "Get them out of the path of civilization. Scenes of disorder like that of yesterday are sure to be repeated so long as these red pets of the Government are allowed to cumber the earth. The State ought to slaughter them like wolves."

Cook read this with a flush of hot blood in his face. He was quite familiar with such articles, but he went to bed that night feeling more keenly than ever in his life the difficult position he was called upon to fill. To race hatred these people had added greed for the Shi-an-nay lands. In this editorial was vented the savage hate of thousands of white men. There could be no doubt of it—and were it not for a fear of the general government the terms of its hatred would have been carried out long ago.

In the early morning he took Claude and went to the jail.

The sheriff met him suavely. "Oh—certainly captain—you can see him," he said, but his tone was insulting.

When the agent and his interpreter entered his cell Howling Wolf looked up with a low cry of pleasure. He took Cook's hand in both of his and said slowly:

"My friend, take me away from here. I cannot bear to be locked up. I have done nothing. When I showed my paper the cattlemen laughed. When I reached my hand in friendship they spat upon it. This made my heart very bitter but I did not fight."

When he had secured Wolf's story in detail, the Major said, "Do not worry, Wolf, I will see that you are released."

To the sheriff he said: "What are you holding this man for?"

"For shooting with intent to kill."

"But he didn't shoot. He had no weapon. It is absurd."

"How do *you* know he didn't?"

"Because all his companions say so; he says so."

"Oh! You'd take his word would you?"

"Yes in a thing of that kind. Did you find a gun on him?"

"No—but—"

"What chance did he have for concealing it? Were you there when the shooting took place?"

"No—but credible witnesses ——"

"As a matter of fact the saloon keeper was struck by a bullet aimed at Howling Wolf by a cowboy. Where is that cowboy? Why has he not been arrested?"

"I don't believe it. You'll take——"

"It's not your business to believe or disbelieve. Did you have a warrant to arrest Wolf?" asked the captain sternly.

"No matter whether I did or not," replied the sheriff insolently, "he's here and you can't take him away. You can protect your thieves and murderers in the reservation, but when they come in here and go howling around you'll find the case different." In this tone he blustered.

The captain was firm. "I believe Wolf to be entirely innocent and I'll see justice done." He called Claude again and said, "Tell Howling Wolf to be quiet—tell him not to be scared. He'll have to remain in jail till I can get a release. I'm going to see the judge now. Tell him I'm his friend and I won't let these people harm him."

The visit to the judge was still more disheartening. He, too, was suave and patient, but it was plain he intended to do nothing to help the agent. "It may be that a mistake has occurred, but if so the trial will clear your man. As it is the Indian is arrested in a street brawl in which a man is shot. The Indian is arrested, I may add, in due course of law and must stand trial."

"Very well, we'll go to trial—but meanwhile release my man on parole. I'll answer for him."

The judge had been expecting this, but professed to ponder. "I don't think that would be wise. We've had great difficulty in apprehending offenders. We might find this man hard to reapprehend. I appreciate your desire to——"

"Judge Bray, you are mistaken," replied Cook with heat, for he understood the covert insult. "You have never failed of getting your man but once, and then, as you know, it was the fault of your sheriff. Where could this man go? I know every man on my reservation. He could not hide out on the hills, and he would be a marked man on any other reservation. Besides all these considerations—I know Howling Wolf. I am peculiarly anxious to have him released till his trial. He dreads confinement—he feels his arrest as an injustice and it will embitter him. More than this I have pledged my word to him to secure his release."

The judge was obdurate. "The citizens are incensed at the frequent depredations of your charges," he said, "and they will not submit longer to any laxity. I cannot help you."

The agent rose grimly. "Very well, I'll see justice done this man if I bring the whole power of the department to bear on you. I will enlist the aid of every lover of justice in the country. Howling Wolf has been abused. So far from shooting he came in here as my messenger unarmed and peaceful. Your drunken citizens assaulted him. I do not wonder that my people say you have the hearts of coyotes."

As Cook drove away out of the squalid town he felt as he had several times before—the cruel, leering, racial hate of the border man, to whom the red man is big game. He had a feeling that, among all these thousands of American citizens, not one had the heart to stand out and say, "I'll help you secure justice."

His heat made him momentarily unjust, for there were many worthy souls, even in this village, who would have joined him could they have been made intimately informed of the case. At the moment he felt the helpless dismay of the red man when enmeshed by the laws of the whites.

But he was not a man to yield a just position without a struggle. As he rode he planned a campaign which should secure justice for Howling Wolf. His meeting with the half-frenzied wife of the captive only added new vigor to his resolution. With face haggard with suffering the poor woman cried out to him, "Where is he—my husband?"

He gave her such comfort as he could and drove on mentally writing letters, which should make the townsmen writhe with shame of their inhumanity.

Court did not sit for many weeks, but Howling Wolf knew nothing of that. He lived in daily hope of being released. He fed his heart on the words of his friend the agent. He brooded over his wrongs like a wounded wolf in his den, till his heart became bitter in his bosom. The glow of his new found love of the white man had died out—smothered by the cold gloom of his prison. He remembered only one white face with pleasure—that of his agent. All others were grinning or hateful or menacing.

He would have gone mad but for the visits of his wife and children who came to see him and were allowed to approach the bars of his cell so that he might lay his hands on the head of his little son. These brief visits comforted him—for the sake of his wife and children he lived.

In a week or two the people of Big Snake had quite forgotten Howling Wolf. If any word recalled him to their minds they merely said, "Do him good to feel the inside of a stone wall. It'll take the fight out of him. He'll be good Injun once he gets out. He's in luck to escape being strung up."

Now the town possessed a baseball team that had defeated every other club in the State, excepting one. St. Helen's had proved a Waterloo to Big Snake on the Fourth of July and so its citizens fairly ached for a chance to "do St. Helen's up," and win back some of the money they had lost.

One morning about two weeks after his imprisonment Howling Wolf's keen ears caught the sound of far-off drums and he wondered if the soldiers were coming at last to release him. His heart leaped with joy and he sprang to his feet vigorous, alert, and so listened long. He could hear plainly the voice of the bugle and he fancied he could detect the marching of columned feet. His friend, the agent, was coming to punish his captors.

He was not afraid of the soldier chiefs. They fought honorably. They did not shut their enemies up in cells and take their arms away. They made war in the open air and on the hills. A shout of joy was about to break from his lips when the jailer entered the corridor much excited. He talked as he came, "I'll take the red-skin along—anyhow."

He made a great many signs to his captive, but Howling Wolf only understood one or two of them. "Come with me," and "I'll kill you."

He drew his blanket round him and thought. "I will go. I will at least escape these walls. If I die I will die under the sky where the sun can see me."

He quietly followed the sheriff outside, but when he saw the handcuffs he rebelled and shook his head.

The sheriff made bungling signs again and said, "All right—but if you try to run away I'll bore a hole in ye big as a haystack—that's all. I won't stand any funny business."

Howling Wolf comprehended nothing of all this save the motion toward the gun, which he took to mean that he was to be killed. The excitement of his captor, the mystery of all he did, his threatening gestures were convincing. But Howling Wolf was a chief. He had never flinched in battle and as he felt the wind of the wide sky on his face he lifted his head and said in his heart:

"If I am to die, I am ready; but I will die fighting."

The sheriff motioned him to get into his buggy and he obeyed—for the hand of the sherff was on his revolver—and they rode through the town, which was almost deserted. Far up the street Howling Wolf could hear the noise of the drum and his heart swelled big with a sense of coming trouble. Was he being led out to be tortured? Perhaps he would be permitted to fight his way to death? "No matter—I am ready."

A man at the door of the drug store called jovially:

"Where are you going, Mr. Sheriff?"

"Out to see the ball game. I happened to have only this one prisoner so thought I'd take him along. Blowed if I'm going to miss the game for a greasy buck-Injun."

"Look out he don't give you the slip."

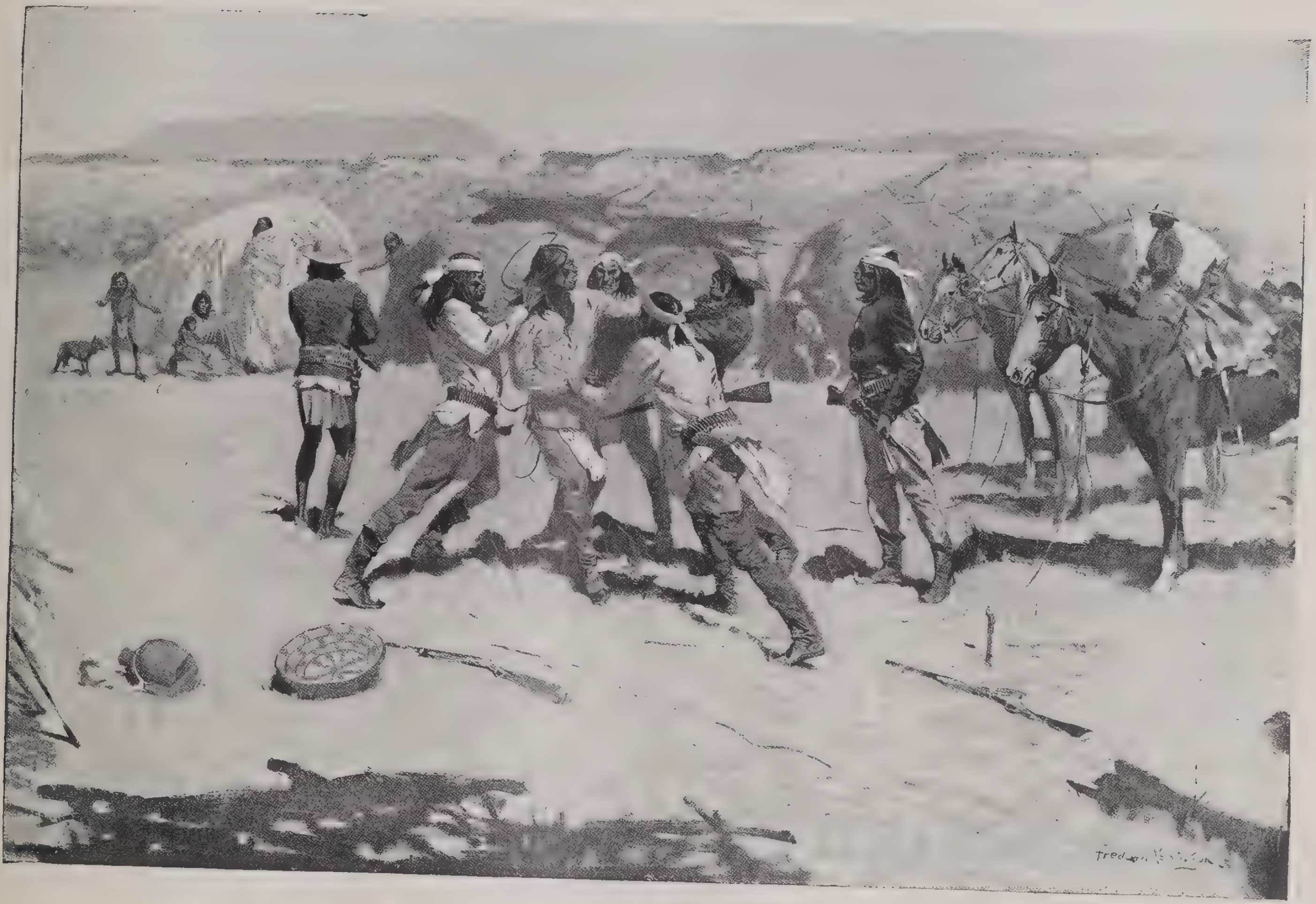
The sheriff winked meaningly. "There'll be a right lively fox hunt if he does. The boys would like nothing better than to rope an Injun to-day. It would draw better than a bullfight."

They both laughed at this notion and Howling Wolf seized upon the menace in the sheriff's voice though his words were elusive. As they neared the grand stand the noise of the great crowd reached across the quiet fields and Howling Wolf saw hundreds of people streaming along the road before him. His limbs grew tense. It was plain that his captor was driving directly toward this vast throng of savage white people.

He looked round him. On either side were rows of growing corn and beyond the field on the right was the grove of trees which marked the course of the river. As he remembered this his final resolution came. "If I am to die I will die now," and he sprang from his seat to the ground and dived beneath the wire fence. He heard the sheriff's gun crack twice and thrice, but he rose unhurt and with a wild exultation in his heart ran straight toward the river. Again the sheriff fired, his big revolver sounding loud in the windless air.

Then, as if his shooting were a signal, a squad of cowboys rose out of a gully just before the fugitive, and with wild whoopings swept toward him. They came with lariats swinging high above their heads, and Howling Wolf, knowing well their pitiless ferocity, turned and ran straight toward the sheriff, who stood loading his gun on the inside of the fence. As he ran Howling Wolf could see great ranks of yelling people rushing over the field. He ran now to escape being dragged to death, hoping the sheriff might shoot him through the heart as he came near.

The officer shot twice at long range but missed, and, as the panting red man ran straight toward him the sheriff fell to the earth

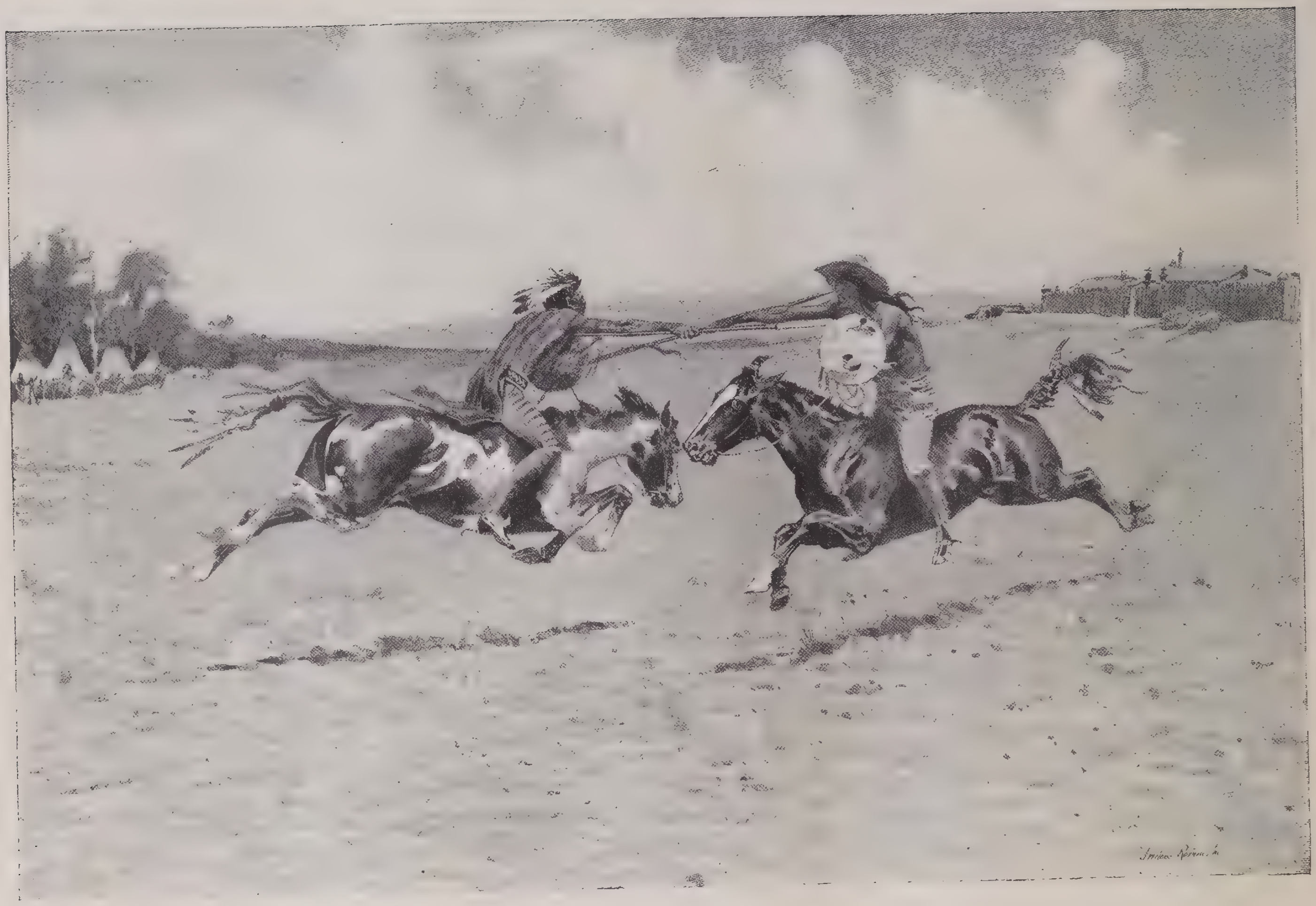


The Arrest of the Scout

Suspected of having kidnaped an Indian girl and murdered her mother, this man was traced to a tiswin camp, where he was found carousing with other drinkers. Though a member of their own corps, his brother scouts, after disarming and binding him, brought him back to the post, where he was lodged in the guard-house.

Illustration from
MASSAI'S CROOKED TRAIL
by Frederic Remington

Originally published in
HARPER'S MAGAZINE, *January, 1898*



An Indian Duel

The Indian on the pinto pony is armed with a big buffalo-lance, while his opponent wields a skin-knife. As depicted by the artist the buffalo-lance is being driven clean through his antagonist's shoulder.

Illustration from
SUN-DOWN LEFLARE'S WARM SPOT
by Frederic Remington

Originally published in
HARPER'S MAGAZINE, *September, 1898*

and crawled away, leaving Howling Wolf to face a squad of twenty infuriated cowboys and a thousand citizens just behind on foot. With the light of hell on their faces they shot down the defenseless man and then alighted, and, with remorseless hate, crushed his face beneath their feet as if he were a rattlesnake. They stabbed his dead body and shot it full of bullets. They fought for a chance to kick him. They lost all resemblance to men. Wolves fighting over the flesh of their own kind could not have been more heartlessly malevolent—more appalling in their ferocity.

In the clamor of their breathless cursing and cries of hate a strong clear voice made itself heard—a vibrant manly voice:

"STOP, *in the name o' Christ!*" And through the wolfish mass a tall young man in the garb of a Catholic priest forced his way. His big, broad face was set with resolution and his brow gleamed white in the midst of the tumbling mass of bronzed weather-beaten border men.

"*Stand back!* Are you fiends of hell? Where is your shame? A thousand to one! Is this your American chivalry? Oh, you cowards!"

He stood above the fallen man like a lion over the body of his mate. His voice quivered with the sense of his horror and indignation.

"God's curse on ye if you touch this man again." The crowd was silent now and the priest went on: "I have seen the beasts of the African jungles at war and I know the habits of the serpents of Nicaragua—I know your American bears and wolves, but I have never seen any savagery like this."

Every word he spoke could be heard by the mob; every man who listened looked aside. They were helpless under the lash of the young priest's scorn. "You are the brave boys of whom we read," he said, turning to the cowboys. "You are the Knights of the plains ——" Then his righteous wrath flamed forth again. "Knights of the plains! The graveyard jackals turn sweet in your presence. Brave men are ye to rope and drag a defenseless man—and you!" He turned to the slinking sheriff. "You are of my parish—I know you. The malediction of the church hangs over *you* for this day's work." He paused for breath; then added: "Take up the body of this man. He is dead but his blood will yet make this town a stench in the nostrils of the world. You cannot do these things to-day and not be condemned of all Christian peoples."

With a contemptuous wave of his hand he dismissed the mob. "Go home! Go back to your wives and children and boast of your great deed. Leave the dead with me."

The crowd slunk away, leaving the sheriff, the priest, and a doctor, who volunteered his services, to examine the bleeding flesh that had once been a tall and powerful red chieftain.

"The man is alive!" said the doctor with a tone of awe. "Life is not extinct. Bring me some water."

"Save him—for the love of Christ!" exclaimed the priest as he dropped on his knees beside the torn and trampled red man. "It would be a miracle, a blessed miracle, if he should live. It is impossible!"

"His heart is beating—and I think it grows stronger," repeated the doctor as he fell to work with deft energy.

"What is this?" asked the priest as he picked up a bloody and crumpled paper. He opened it and, as he finished reading it, he raised his eyes and prayed silently with a sort of breathless intensity, while the tears ran down his cheeks:

"Lord Jesus, grant me humbleness and patience with these people. Let my heart not harden with hate of this injustice."

Then, looking at the poor bruised body of Howling Wolf, he said:

"O God, the pity of it! The pathos of it! His heart was good toward all men and they crushed him to earth!"

They took Howling Wolf up, the priest received him in his house and cared for him and he lived—but so battered, so misshapen that his own wife did not know him.

The cloud of his hate and despair never lifted. He spoke no word to any white man save to the good priest and to his friend, the agent, and when he died neither of them knew of it. No white man knows where his body was hidden away.

THE SILENT EATERS

THE SILENT EATERS

I

THE BEGINNINGS OF POWER

I was born a soldier.
I have lived thus long.
In despite of all, I have lived thus long.
—*Sioux War Song.*

ONE day in 1854, while the Uncapappas, a branch of my father's people, were camped in pursuit of buffalo on a tributary of the Platte River, a half-breed scout came into the circle from the south, bearing a strange message. He said: "The great war chief of the whites is coming with beads and cloth and many good things. He desires all the red men to meet him in a council of peace. He is sorry that we are at war. Therefore, he is inviting all your chieftains to his lodge to receive presents and to smoke."

Up to this time the Uncapappas had never made talk with the soldiers, and many, like myself, had never seen a white man. Our home lay to the east and north of the Black Hills, far away from contact with the settlers. Of them we had heard, but only remotely. Many of our own men had never seen a French trapper. Our lives still went on as they had been going since the earliest time.

We followed the buffalo wherever they went within the limits of the hunting grounds which we claimed. On the east were our cousins, the Yanktonaise and Minneconjous. To the north of the Cannonball lived the Rees and Mandans; to the northwest, across the Powder River lurked the Crows, our ever-ready enemies. On the head waters of the Arkansaw the Utes, a powerful mountain people, dwelt. The Comanches and many other unknown folk held the country far, far to the south, while to the east lay a land more mysterious than any other, for it was said that both white men and red men claimed it and warred for the mastery of it. Of the rest of the world most of us knew nothing; all was dark as a cave inhabited by bats and serpents.

Therefore, when the messenger had made his plea the chiefs called a great council to ponder this new and important matter. At this time the four head men, the civic chiefs, of my people, were The Four Horns, The Red Horn, The Running Antelope and The Loud-Voiced Hawk. These men had full power to call a convention and all the people came together obediently and some of the boys, like myself, crept near to listen.

It was in early summer. The grass was new and sweet; the buffalo were fat, the horses swift, and each day was a feast, with much dancing, and we lads raced horses when the old men would permit. Not one of all our tribe had care as a bedfellow at this time. Even the aged smiled like children.

In those days the plains were black with buffalo and the valleys speckled with red deer and elk, and no lodge had fear of hunger or frost. In winter we occupied tepees of thick warm fur with the edges fully banked with snow and we were not often cold. We had plenty of buckskin to wear and no one went unsatisfied. You would look long to find a people as happy as we were, because we lived as the Great Spirit had taught us to do, with no thought of change.

Nevertheless, our wise men had a foreboding of coming trouble, and when The Hawk, who was a very old man, rose in the council to speak, his face was deeply troubled. Once he had been ready of speech, but his tongue now trembled with age and his shoulders weighed heavy upon his lungs, for he coughed twice before he could begin.

"My friends, listen to me. I am an old man. I shall not be able to meet in council again. The rime of many winters has stiffened my lips, but I am glad this matter has come up now. My heart is full of things to tell you. My children, I have had a dream.

Last night I went forth on the hill to pray and as I prayed I grew weary and fell asleep, and I saw a great council such as that the Graybeard now asks us to attend. I beheld much food and many blankets given away, and then a great fight began. A cloud of thick smoke arose. There were angry confusion and slaying and wailing in the midst of the smoke, so that my limbs seemed rooted to the ground in my fear. Now I know this dream was intended for a warning. Beware of those who come bringing gifts. They seek to betray you." With uplifted hand he faced all the people and called again, very loud, "Beware of those who bring presents, for they will work sorrow among you."

Then he sank back exhausted and all the chiefs were silent, but The Hawk's wife began to sing a sad song, and as she sang, one by one the other chiefs rose and said: "The Hawk is wise. We will not go to meet this man. We will not take his presents. He comes like a Comanche disguised as a wolf. We will be as cunning as he. Why should he offer presents unless he wishes to gain an advantage of us?"

At last a young warrior, a grave man of gentle and serious face, stood in his place and said: "My father, I am a young man. I have seen only twenty-two winters and perhaps you will not listen to me, but I intend to speak, nevertheless. I have always listened when my elders have spoken, and especially have I opened my ears when strangers from the East came to our lodges. Your decision is wise. It is well to have nothing to do with these deceitful ones. Listen now to my request. I desire to be the chief soldier in this matter. If you wish to oppose the givers of gifts and the policy which goes with their refusal, place the matter in my hands and I will see that your desires are carried out."

The firm, courageous bearing of this youth pleased the elders, and after deliberation they said: "It is well. We will make you our executive in this matter. You shall be Chief Soldier of Treaties."

In this way was my chief *Ta-Tank-io-Tanka*, The Sitting Bull, made what you would call "Secretary of War" over seven hundred lodges of my people. He had already attained rank as a valiant but not reckless warrior. The Rees knew him, and so did the Crows. He came of good family, though his father was only a minor chief. His uncle was Four Horns, and his grandfather, The Jumping Bull, was an active and powerful man whose influence undoubtedly was of use to the young chief. His name had never been borne by any other man of his tribe. At fourteen he had counted *coup* on a Crow. He had been wounded in the foot while dashing upon an enemy, and he still walked with a slight limp. He was active, unassuming, and capable of many things.

But his fame as a peacemaker had already far outrun his renown as a warrior. He had been made a chief by the Ogallallahs because of his firm sense of justice. Only a year before this time a band of the young warriors of his own tribe had stolen from their cousins a herd of horses while the two tribes were camped side by side, and The Sitting Bull, having heard of this, went to the young men and said:

"We do not make reprisals upon our friends. We only take from our enemies," and thereupon had led the horses back to their owners.

In return for this good deed the Ogallallahs had made him a chief among them, though he took no part in their councils.

He was a natural leader and a persuasive orator. A chief among my people, you know, is a peacemaker, and The Sitting Bull was always gentle of voice. If he saw two men squabbling he parted them and said: "Do not make war among yourselves. What is the matter? Tell me your dispute." Sometimes he would say: "Here is a horse for each of you. Go and wrangle no more." When he was very successful in the hunt he always went about the camp, and wherever a sick man or an aged woman lived, there he left a haunch of venison or some buffalo meat. This made him many friends. He did not desire riches for himself, but for his tribe.

Therefore nearly all the tribesmen were glad when he was made treaty chief and given the charge of all such matters. He was at once what the white people would call Secretary of State and of War.

Immediately after his election he called the treaty messenger into his lodge and said: "Return to those that sent you and say this: 'The Uncapappas have no need of your food or clothing. The hills are clouded with buffalo, the cherries are ripening in the thickets. When we desire any of the white man's goods we will buy them. Go in peace.'"

In this way the white men first heard of The Sitting Bull.

Yes, in those wondrous days my people were many and powerful. The allied tribes of Sioux (as you white men call them) held all the land from Big Stone Lake westward to the Yellowstone River and south to the Platte—that is to say, all of what you call South Dakota, part of Wyoming, and half of Nebraska. We often went as far as the Rocky Mountains in our search for food, for the buffalo were always shifting ground. As the phantom lakes of the plain mysteriously appear and disappear, so they came and went.

Where the bison were, there plenty was; we had no fear. But they roamed widely. For these reasons my people required much territory, and, though the wild cattle were many, we were sometimes obliged to enter the lands of our enemies to make our killing, and these expeditions were the causes of our wars with the Crows on the west and with the Comanches on the south. However, these wars were not long or bloody. For the most part we lived quietly, peacefully, with only games to keep our sinews tense.

In the expeditions which followed The Sitting Bull's promotion he became the executive head. He was chief of police by virtue of his office, and his was the hand which commanded tranquillity and order in the camp. Whenever a messenger entered the circle the sentinels brought him directly to the chief's lodge and there waited orders. No one thought of stepping between The Sitting Bull and his duties, for, though so quiet, he could be very stern.

He laid aside all weapons—for this is the custom among the chiefs—and carried only his embroidered pipe-bag and his fan, nothing more. His face was always calm and his voice gentle. He seemed to have no thought of self, but spoke always of the welfare of his tribe. When a question came to him for decision he said: "This is good for my people. We will do it." Or, "This is bad for my people. We will refuse." He raised himself by building upon the welfare of his race.

It was for this reason he refused again to meet General Harney in 1855 at Fort Pierre. He knew something then of the floods of white men pouring into Iowa and Minnesota. He had his spies out and was aware of every boat that came up the Missouri. He already possessed a well-defined policy. To every trader he said: "Yes, I am glad to see you. My people have skins to sell and tobacco and ammunition to buy. This exchange is good. Come and trade." But to the messenger of the white men's government he said: "I do not want your presents. My young men earn their goods by hunting. We are not in need of treaty makers."

So it was that his fame spread among the border men and he came to be called a fierce warrior, ever ready to kill, when the truth is he protected those who came to his camp; even the spies of Washington had reason to thank The Sitting Bull for his clemency.

The years passed pleasantly and my tribe had little foreboding of danger. Our game remained plentiful and, though the rumors of the white man's coming thickened, the people paid little heed to them, though the chiefs counciled upon it gravely. Then one day came the news that the Dakotas, our cousins, were at war with the whites. Soon after this, word came that they had been driven out of their land into our territory. Then it was that the Uncapappas first began to know the power of the invaders. I was but a lad, but I remember well the incredulous words of my father and mother when the story of the battles first were told at our fireside. The head men were uneasy and The Sitting Bull seemed especially gloomy and troubled.

In council he said: "Our brothers have been wrong. They should not make war upon the white man. He has many things that we need—guns and cloth and knives. We should be friendly with him. I do not make war on him, though I fear his presents and stop my ears to his promises. I forecast that we shall be pushed out."

The news came to us also at this time that the white men were fighting among themselves far to the south, but we never met anyone who had seen this with his own eyes. We had no clear conception of what lay to the east of us. We only knew that the Chippewas lived there and many whites who were friendly with them, but no one of all our wise old men could tell us more.

Once I heard the chief say: "I do not understand why the white man leaves his own land to invade ours. It must be a sad country with little game, and if he came here only to hunt or trade we would make him welcome—but I fear he comes to steal our hunting grounds away. If he is in need and comes peaceably, let him share our buffalo. There is enough to feed all the world."

Meanwhile the four head chiefs were growing old and lethargic, and so, naturally, step by step, The Sitting Bull came to be the head of all our band. He drew toward him all those who believed in living the simple life of our ancestors far away from all enemies. With songs and dances and feasts we marked the seasons, living peacefully for the most part, except now and then when a small party was sent out against the Crows or the Mandans, till in the 110th mark of my father's winter count—that is in 1869—the whites established a trading post at the Grand River and put some soldiers in it and sent out couriers to all the Sioux tribes to assemble there for a council. The time had come (as it afterward appeared) when the settlers wanted to inhabit our lands.

This, I think, was the first time the chief clearly understood the attitude of the government toward him. Another day marks the beginning of the decline of my people.

I remember well the coming of that messenger. I was awakened by the sound of a horse's feet, and, looking out of the tepee, I saw a small man on a big horse—bigger than any I had ever seen before. Warriors were surrounding him, asking, "Who are you?"

"Take me to The Sitting Bull," he said, and just then the chief looked from his lodge and said, "Bring him to me."

He was brought and set before The Sitting Bull, and they looked at each other for a time in silence. I was peering in under the side of the lodge and could not see the chief's face, but the stranger smiled and said: "Are The Sitting Bull's eyes getting dim that he does not know his old playmate?"

"The Badger," replied the chief. Then he smiled and they shook hands. "You are changed, my friend; you were but a boy when we played at hunting in The Cave Hills."

"That is true," replied the man, who was a French half-breed. "I do not blame you for looking at me with blind eyes. I would not have known you. I have a message for you."

"Bring food for our brother," commanded the chief, and after The Badger had eaten the chief said, "Now tell me whence you come and why are you here?"

"That is a long tale," said The Badger. "It is a story you must think about."

And so for three days The Badger sat before the chief and they talked. And each night the camp muttered gravely, discussing the same question. The chief's face grew sterner each day. He smoked long and there were times when his eyes rested on the ground in a silence of deep thought while The Badger told of the mighty white man—of his wonderful deeds, of his armies, of his iron horses, of all these things which we afterward saw for ourselves. He went farther. He told us of the white man's government which was lodged in a great village made of wood and stone. He said the white men were more numerous than the buffalo and that their horses were plenty as prairie dogs. "You do well, my friend, not to go to war against these people. They are all-conquering. What can you do against magicians who create guns and knives and powder?"

"I have no hate of them," replied the chief. "All I ask is to be let alone."

"Listen, my friend. This is what the white man is doing. A great chief, whose name is Sheridan, followed by many warriors, is killing or subduing all the red people to the south. He has broken the Comanches; the Kiowas and Pawnees—all bend the neck to him. Ferocious leaders have been sent out from Washington with orders to gather all your race into certain small lands and there teach them the white man's way. Whether they wish to do so or not does not matter. They must go or be blown to pieces by his guns. My friend, that is what they mean to do with you. They want you to come to the mouth of Grand River and to the Standing Rock, there to give up your hunting and learn the white man's way. The great war chief of the whites has said it."

The chief's eyes flamed. "And if I refuse?"

"Then he will send a long line of his horsemen to fetch you."

The chief grimly smiled. "Hoh! Well, go back and tell them to come. The Sitting Bull has got along very well in the ways of his fathers thus far and in those ways he will continue. The land is wide to the west and game is plenty."

But The Badger then said: "My brother, you know me well. We can speak plainly. The white chief sent me, I say that now. He asked me to come, and I did so. I came as a friend in order that you might not be deceived. I tell you the truth—the white man is moving westward, like a feeding herd of buffalo, slow but sure. His heart is bitter toward us and we must keep silence before him. He wants all the land east of the Missouri and south of the Black Hills. He demands that you give it up."

My chief was sitting in his soldiers' lodge; few were there. My father was looking in at the door and I, a lad, was beside him. I saw the veins swell out in the chief's neck as he rose and spoke:

"My friend, out there" (he swept his hand to the west) "is our land, a big open space covered with game. Go back to your friends, the white men, and say that The Sitting Bull is Uncapappa and free to do as he wills. He chooses to live as his fathers lived. As the Great Spirit made him, so he is, and shall remain."

II

POLICY AND COUNCIL

Nevertheless The Badger's talk had enlightened my chief. He pondered deeply over his words and came at last fairly to understand the white man's demands. He lived by planting; the red man by hunting. The pale faces said: "The red man has too much land. We will take part of it for ourselves. In return we will teach him how to plant and make bread and clothing." But they did not stop there. They said if the red man does not wish to be a planter and wear our clothing we will send out soldiers with guns and make him do our will.

The chief's first duty was to reject these terms, and this he did; but a second messenger came bringing tobacco and round disks of bread. The chief ground the tobacco under his heel and his soldiers spun the bread down the hill into the river. The emissary stood by and saw this merry game and was wise enough to remain silent.

Once a courier who would not cease talking when commanded by the chief was whipped out of the village. So it came to be that this great camp on the Little Missouri was called "The Hostile Camp of Sitting Bull."

You have heard those who now deride my chief and say that he was no warrior, that he was a coward, a man of no account; but they are ignorant fools who say this. Go read in the books of the agent at Standing Rock; there you will find records of the respect and fear in which the agents of Washington held my chief in those days. You may read there of seven messengers who were sent out to tell "Sitting Bull and his irreconcilables they must come in and disarm"—and if you read on you will learn how these spies came straggling back without daring to utter one word of the government's commands to my chief.

They lied about him, the cowardly whelps, and said he threatened them. In truth, they sneaked into his presence and said nothing. In this way the agent got a false impression of the chief, and reported that he was at war with the whites, which was not true.

The Sitting Bull was now both Secretary of War and commander-in-chief of all those who believed in the ways of the fathers. He drew men to him by the boldness and gentleness of his words. His camp was the refuge of those who declined to obey the agents of the white man's government. The circle of his followers each year widened and his fame spread far among the white men who hated him for the lands he held.

But while my chief was thus holding hard to the ancestral customs, like a rock in a rushing stream, our cousins, the Yanktonaise and the Ogallallahs, were slowly yielding to the power of Washington. Like the Wyandottes, the Miamis and the Illini, they were retiring before the wonder-working plowmen.

In the autumn of the year 1869 the agent again sent out a call for us to come and join another peace council. Washington wanted to buy some more of our land. Of course The Sitting Bull refused, and gave commands that no one leave his camp, except such messengers as he sent to check the vote for a treaty. "I have made a vow and I will never treat with you," he said.

In spite of all this a minority of the Sioux nation, weak, cowardly souls, pieced out with half-breeds and rank outsiders, (like the Santees who had no claim to be counted), made a treaty wherein they basely ceded away, without our consent, a large strip of our land in Dakota, and fixed upon certain small tracts which were to be held perpetually as reservations for all the allied tribes of Sioux. The Uncapappas were both sad and furious, but what could they do?

The establishment of the agency at Grand River followed this, and many of the Yanktonaise moved in and began to accept the white man's food and clothing in payment for their loss of freedom.

I do not blame these men now. They were afraid, they were overawed by the white men, but they had no power to make such a treaty binding on us, and my chief, being very sad and very angry, said: "Fools! They have sold us to our enemies in a day of fear."

Our world began, at that moment, to fade away, for as the fort and agencies grew in power along the Missouri, as they put forth their will against my people, two great parties were formed. There were many who said: "The white man is the world conqueror; we must follow his trail," but those who said, "We will die as we have lived—red men, free and without fear," came naturally to the lodge of my chief and gladly submitted to his leadership. Go read in the records of the War Department, whether this is true or false. You do not need a red man's accusation to prove the perfidy of Congress.

My chief's policy remained as before. "Do not make war on the whites, but keep our territory clear of the Crows and Mandans."

He had surrounded himself with a band of trusted warriors whom he used as a general uses the members of his staff. They were his far-reaching eyes and ears. They brought him news of distant expeditions. They kept order in the camp and protected him from the jealousy of subordinate chiefs—for you must know there had grown up in the hearts of lesser men a secret hate of our leader. This bodyguard of the chief was called "The Silent Eaters," because they met in private feasts and talked quietly without songs or dancing, whereas all the others in the tribe danced and made merry. With these "Silent Eaters" the chief freely discussed all the great problems which arose.

My father was one of these and the chief loved him. To him The Sitting Bull spoke plainly. "Why should we go to a reservation and plow the hard ground," he said, "when the buffalo are waiting for us in the wild lands? We owe the white man nothing. We can take care of ourselves. We buy our guns and ammunition; we pay well for them. We are on the earth which the Great Spirit gave to us in the beginning. Its fruit is ours, its wood and pasturage are ours. Let the white men keep to their own. Why do they trouble us? Do they think the Great Spirit a fool, that he creates people without reason?"

He knew all that went on at the agency. He heard that leaders in opposition to his ways, the ways of our fathers, were rising among the renegades who preferred to camp in idleness beside the white man's storehouse. He knew that they were denouncing him, but he did not retaliate upon them. "I do not shed blood out of choice, but of necessity," he said. "I ask only leave to live as my father lived. The white man is cunning in the making of weapons, but we are the better hunters. We will trade our skins for knives and powder. So far all is well."

But you know how it is, the white men would not keep to their own. They came into our lands, and when our young warriors drove them out all white men cursed The Sitting Bull. This the chief did not seek; it was forced upon him.

I will tell you how this came about.

In 1873 the government, being moved by those who seek gold, sent a commission to meet with my chief, saying, "We desire to buy the Black Hills."

"I do not care to sell," he replied, and they went away chagrined. Soon after this our scouts came upon a regiment of cavalry spying round the hills. They came from the west, and Black Wolf, the leader of the scouts, asked, "What are you doing here?"

The captain laughed and mocked him and said, "We ride because our horses are fat and need exercise."

These words, when repeated to my chief, disturbed him deeply. "We must watch these men. They are spies of those who wish to steal the Black Hills as the plowmen have already taken the land east of the Missouri. We can not afford to move again. It is necessary to make a stand."

Then General Custer—"Long Hair"—was sent on an expedition into the hills and the whole tribe became very anxious; even those who had accepted the agent's goods and lived slothfully at the Standing Rock began to take alarm. They plainly felt at last the white man pushing, pushing from the east.

Those who went away to see came back reporting that the settlers were thick beyond numbering on the prairies and that all the forests were being destroyed by them. They were plowing above the graves of our sires, whose bones were being flung to the wolves. Steamboats hooted along the rivers and iron horses ran athwart the most immemorial trails. Immigrants were already lining the great muddy river with forts and villages, and some were looking greedily at the Black Hills, in which the soldiers had reported gold.

My people considered Custer's expedition an unlawful incursion on their lands, just as, far to the south, so our friends the Ogallallahs reported, other white men without treaty were moving westward, building railways and driving the buffalo before them. It was most alarming.

The Sitting Bull listened to these tales uneasily, hoping his messengers were misled. He feared and hated the more fiercely all messengers who came thereafter, bringing gifts, and the commission which entered his camp in 1875 found him very dark of face and very curt of speech. Never was he less free of tongue.

They said, "We come to buy the hills."

He replied, "I do not care to sell."

"We will pay well for the loan of the peaks—the high places where the gold is."

"I cannot lend; the hills belong to my people," he said.

"We are your friends. You had better sell, for if you don't the white men will take the hills without pay. They are coming in a flood. Nothing can stop them; their eyes are fixed. You are fighting a losing battle."

"I will not sell," he answered, and turned on his heel, and they too went away without success.

To his "Silent Eaters" he said that night: "So long as the buffalo do not leave us we are safe. It cannot be that the Great Spirit will permit the white men to rob us of both our lands and our means of life. He made us what we are, and so long as we follow our ancient ways we are good in his sight."

Nevertheless, his friends saw that he was greatly troubled. The white hunters were then slaughtering the buffalo for the robes. They were killing merely for the pleasure of killing. The herds were melting away like clouds in the sky, their bones covered the plain, and my chief began to fear that the commissioner had told the truth. He began to doubt the continuance of his race.

III

THE BATTLE OF THE BIG HORN

In the spring of 1876, as your count runs, news came to us that the troops were fighting our brethren, and soon afterward some Cheyennes came to our camp and warned the chief, "The soldiers of Washington are marching to fight you. They intend to force you to go to the reservation."

The Sitting Bull was deeply moved by this news. "Why do they do this? I am not at war with them. They are not good to eat. I kill only game—the beasts that we need for food. I am always for peace. You who know me will bear witness that I take most joy in being peacemaker. I mediate gladly. Now I will make a sign. To show them that we do not care to fight I will move camp. Let us go deep into the West where the soil is too hard for the plow, far from the white man, and there live in peace. It is a land for hunters; those who plant the earth will never come to dispossess us."

After a long discussion his plan was decided upon. It was a sorrowful day for us when we were commanded to leave our native hills and go into a strange land, far from the graves of our forefathers. Songs of piercing sadness rang through the lodges when the camp police went about ordering the departure, and some of the chieftains wished to stay and fight.

"We are surrendering our land to the enemy," they said. "We are throwing part of our people to the wolf in order to preserve the rest."

"The land is wide and empty to the west," urged the chief. "Washington will now be satisfied. He has eaten hugely of our hunting ground; his greed will now be appeased. He will not follow us into the mysterious sunset, because his plow is useless there."

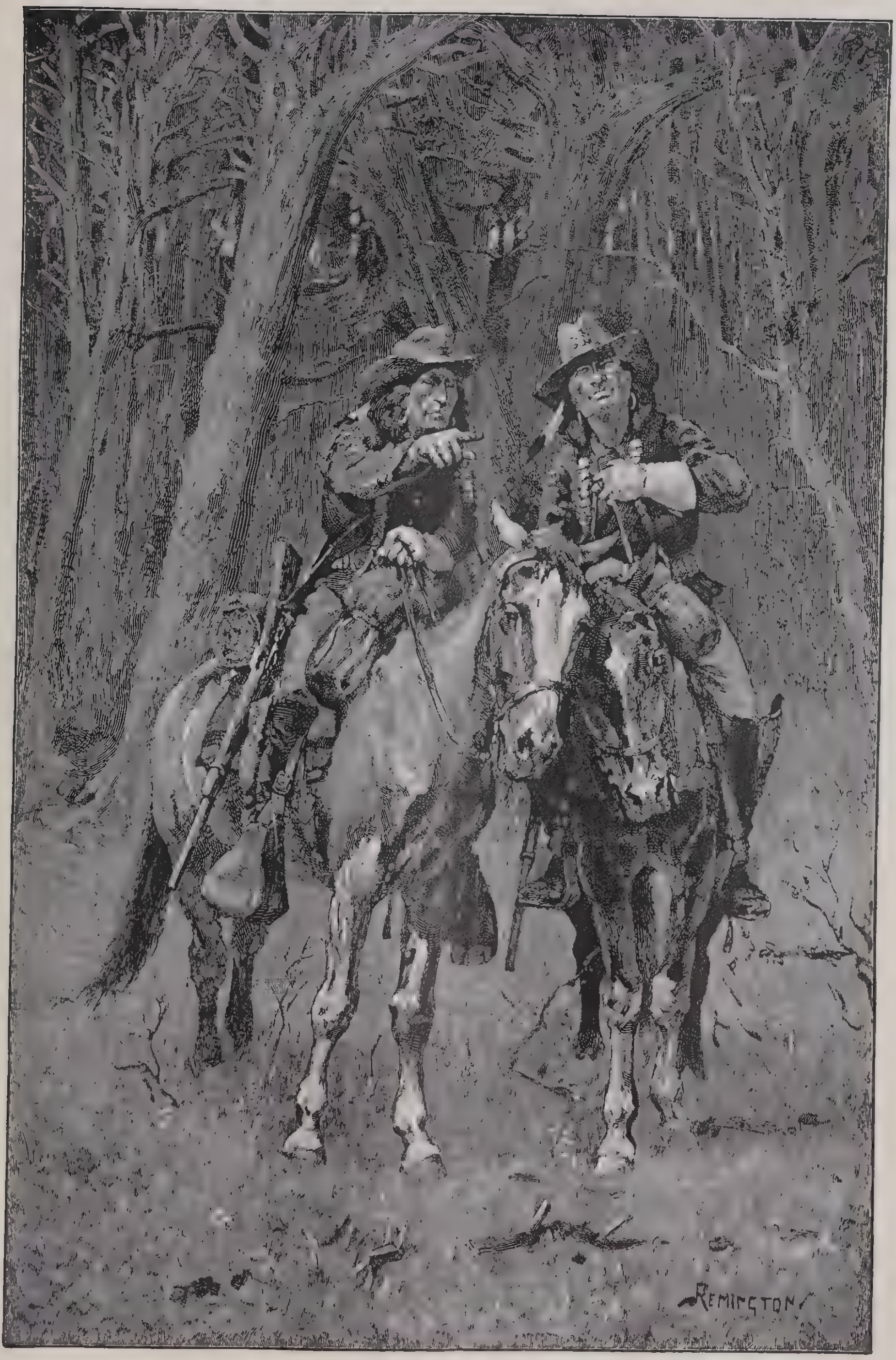
Our camp at this time was in the Cave Hills between the Grand River and the headwaters of the Moreau, and in a great procession we set forth to the west, moving steadily till we reached the Powder River Valley. There we met three hundred lodges of the Cheyennes under the command of Crazy Horse, American Horse, and Two Moon.

To us American Horse said: "We are ready to fight. General Crook is at war upon us, but we have beaten him once and we can do it again. Now we will go with you and camp with you and battle when the time comes. Our fortunes shall be yours. Whatever happens, we will share it with you."

"There will be no need to war," said my chieftain, solemnly. "We have given up our land, we are going far into the west beyond even the Crow country where the buffalo are. Our enemy will not follow us there."

Crazy Horse shook his head. "He will come, this white man. He trails us wherever we go. He has no more pity than the wolf. He has made a vow to sweep us from the earth."

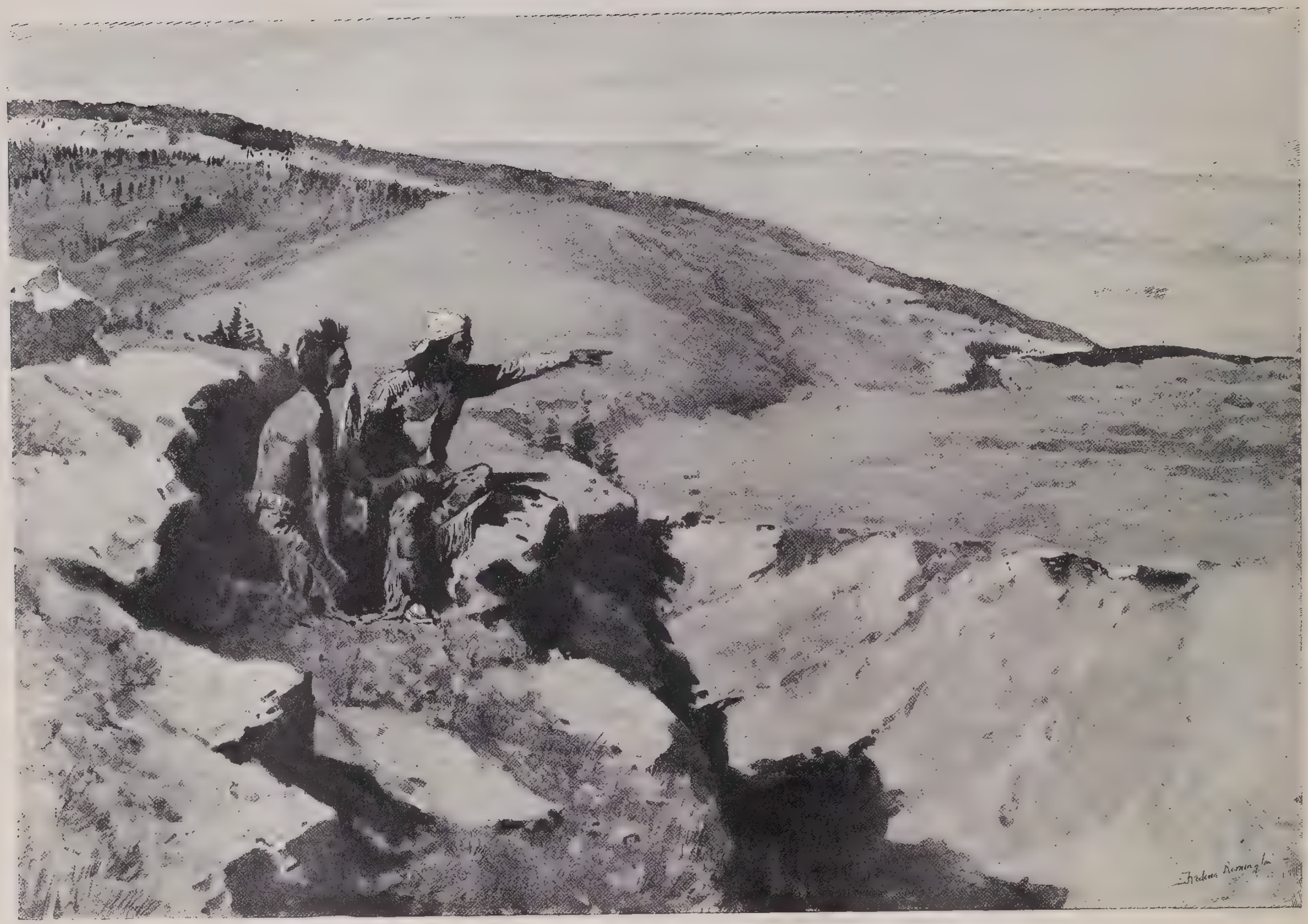
Our camp was very large and my chief was in the fullness of



Cheyenne Scouts Patrolling the Big
Timber of the North Canadian,
Oklahoma

Illustration from
CHEYENNE SCOUTS IN OKLAHOMA

Originally published in
HARPER'S WEEKLY, *April 6, 1889*



Indians Reconnoitering from a Mountain-top

The keen eye of the Indian is able to distinguish objects even in such an extensive view as this appears to be. To the white man, however, the Western landscape—red, yellow, blue, in a prismatic way, shaded by cloud forms and ending among them—appears as something unreal.

Illustration from
SUN-DOWN'S HIGHER SELF
by Frederic Remington

Originally published in
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his command. Some of the Ogallallahs had joined us before and with the Cheyennes we were nearly fifteen hundred lodges. We made no effort at concealing our trail. We moved in a body, and where we went we left a broad and dusty road. We trailed leisurely up the Yellowstone to the mouth of the Rosebud and up the Rosebud to the head of a small creek which emptied into Greasy Grass Creek (a stream which the whites call the Little Big Horn) at a point where there was plenty of wood and good grazing.

The chief as he looked down upon this valley said: "It is good. We will camp here," and to this they all agreed. It was indeed a beautiful place. I was but a lad, but I remember that beautiful scene, finer than anything in all our own lands. Hunting parties were at once sent out to find the buffalo, and some of the chief's "Silent Eaters" mounted the hills to spy backward on our trail.

The hunters reported the country clear of foes and buffalo near, and as the spies brought no news of invaders the people threw off all care. With feasts and dances they began to celebrate their escape from the oppressor. We were beginning the world anew in this glorious country.

One day in midsummer—I remember it now with beating heart—just in the midst of our preparation for a dance, the cry arose: "*The white soldiers—they are coming!* Get your horses!"

I remember clearly the very instant. I was sitting in my father's lodge, painting my face for the dance, when this sound arose. The shouting came from the camp of The Gall, whose lodges stood at the extreme south end of the circle. From where I stood I could see nothing, but as I ran up the west bank to find my horse I detected a long line of white soldiers riding swiftly down the valley from the south. They came like a moving wall and the sun glittered on their guns as they reloaded them. Before them the women and children were fleeing like willow leaves before a November wind.

My heart was beating so hard I could scarcely speak. I was but a boy and had never seen a white soldier, yet now I must fight.

All around me were hundreds of other young men and boys roping, bridling, and mounting the plunging ponies.

As we came sweeping back my father passed us, leading the white horse of the chief, and as we came near the headquarters tent the chief came out wearing a war bonnet and carrying his saddle. This he flung on his horse, and when he was mounted my father and his guard surrounded him and they rode away. My father took my horse and I saw neither him nor the chief till night. I heard that he tried to check the battle, but the young men of Chief Gall's camp had routed the enemy's column before he reached there and the soldiers were spurring their horses into the river and dashing up the hills in mad effort to get away.

The camp was a mighty whirlpool of confusion. The women were taking down the lodges, weeping and singing, the old men and boys were roping the horses together, and the ground was covered with a litter of blankets, saddles, pouches, and other things which escaped notice or seemed unimportant, and all the time we could hear the rapid cracking of the guns and it seemed as if we were all to be killed. No one knew how many soldiers there were. All seemed lost, our shining, peaceful world about to be shattered and destroyed.

I ran to catch another horse, and when I was mounted and once more in sight of the valley it was almost deserted. The women and children were all gathered in throngs on the west bank, straining their eyes toward the cloud of smoke which marked the retreat of soldiers to the southeast, singing songs of prayer and exaltation.

Suddenly a wild cry arose, and looking where an old woman pointed, I saw on the bare crest of the hill to the east a fluttering flag. A moment later four horsemen appeared, then four more, and so in column of fours they streamed into view, a long line of them.

"Go tell the warriors," screamed my mother to me, and, lashing my pony, I started down the slope diagonally toward a body of our soldiers who were returning from pursuit of the other soldiers.

They were warned by some one nearer to them than I. I saw them turn and spur their horses in a wild race along the river bank. I had no weapon, but I kept on till I joined the rear rank. There were hundreds in this charge.

You have heard that my people ambushed Custer. This is a lie. The place where he stood to view our camp was a hill as bare as your hand. He saw us, knew how many we were, and rode to meet us. It was an open attack on our part. Chief Gall led his band up a steep ravine and swept round behind the troopers, each man clinging to the far side of his horse and shooting beneath his neck.

You have heard it said that we outnumbered Custer ten to one. This, too, is false. We had less than twelve hundred warriors, counting old and young. We had old-fashioned guns—many of our men had only clubs or arrows or lances. Many were boys like myself, with not even a club. We were taken unawares, not they. They had the new magazine rifles and six-shot revolvers. They were all experienced warriors, while we were not; indeed most of our men had never been in battle before and they had no notion of discipline. Each man fought alone, without direction. We were a disorderly mass of excited men. Everybody gave orders; no one was leader. That is the way of my people. We have no commander-in-chief. We fight in bands. Chief Gall led one charge, the daughter of Old Horse led another, American Horse led a third, and so it proceeded as a mob goes to war.

I could not see much of what followed, for a great cloud of dust and smoke covered the hill. Nobody had any clear idea of the battle. It was very hot and we took no notice of time, but it must have been about half past ten when the fight began. It did not last very long.

Once as I dashed near I caught a glimpse of the white soldiers, some kneeling, some standing, with their terrible guns ever ready, *crack—crack—crack,* while our warriors circled around them, dashing close in order to fire and retreating to reload. It seemed that some of the soldiers ran out of ammunition early, for they sat holding their guns without firing.

The fire was slackening as I rode down to the river to drink, and when I returned all was still and the smoke was slowly drifting away. Once or twice a band of young braves dashed in close to the last group of tangled bodies, and when no weapon flashed back they dismounted to peer about, looking for Long Hair.

We did not know then that General Custer had cut his hair short, and we all took the body of a man with long black hair to be the chief. I now see that we were mistaken. He was a scout. Some of the men stripped the bodies of the white men of their clothes, while others moved about, counting the dead. There were not many red men killed. Our manner of fighting saved us from heavy loss. You have heard that our soldiers mangled the dead. This is not true. Some crazy old women and a few renegades did so, but our chiefs did not countenance this. You call this a "massacre," but to us it was a battle, honorable to us as to the bluecoats.

The chief's "Silent Eaters" rode forth among the old men and women and commanded them to camp again. This they did, but in a different place, farther down the river, near where the Crow agency now stands.

The chief was very sorrowful, for he realized the weight of this battle. Foolish ones rode about exulting, but he rebuked them. "This is all bad. The Great Father at Washington will now be very angry, for we have killed his soldiers. The war chief will come against us with greater fury than ever. We cannot remain here."

I was told that he did not visit the field of the dead. I do not know the truth of this, but he sat in his lodge, pondering, while Gall and his men held Reno prisoner on the hill. It was only a matter of wearing them out and then the whole army would be defeated, so the foolish ones said.

All the chiefs met in council at sunset, and The Sitting Bull said: "We cannot afford to make war on the white soldiers. They are too many and too brave. My heart is heavy with this day's work. It is our first battle with the bluecoats and I now look to see all their war chiefs assemble against us. We must leave this place. There is no refuge for us here. We must go farther into the unknown world to the west. In ancient days our people migrated and now our turn has come."

There was little sleep that night. All through the long hours the wail of the grief-stricken ones went on, and over the field of the dead the "war women" ran frenzied with grief, mutilating the bodies of their enemies. It was a night to make a boy grow old. My father said: "All hope of ever seeing our ancient home is gone. Henceforth we must dwell in the lands of our enemies." And his face filled one with despair. I wept with my mother.

Early next day the mass of our warriors swept out against Reno, and he, too, would have perished like Custer but that the chief's ever-watchful spies from a distant butte caught and flashed forward these terrifying signs.

"*More soldiers are coming up the river—a mighty host in steamboats.*"

Then the chief sent forth his camp soldiers among the lodges with this news and with orders to get ready to move instantly. Couriers rushed away to the hills to recall those who were besieging Reno. The women and old men again hurriedly packed the lodges, whilst we lads gathered up the ponies, and at last, following the old chiefs and The Sitting Bull, we streamed away up the river toward the mountains, leaving the field to our enemy's scouts, but on every hill stood a "Silent Eater," and through them we had knowledge of each movement of those who rescued Reno and buried the dead.

We camped that night in the hills far toward some great shining, snowy peaks, the like of which we had never seen.

The troops which were under command of General Terry did not stay long. They did not even look about very closely. They were afraid they might find us, I think. They hurriedly buried the dead and retreated quickly down the Big Horn to the Yellowstone, followed by our scouts, who reported every movement to The Sitting Bull.

This retreat of Terry made many of our leaders bold, and some of them, like The Gall, wished to pursue and strike again, but my chief opposed that. It is true he gave orders to return to the mouth of what is now Reno Creek, but he did this because in our haste we had left many ropes and saddles and other things lying scattered on the grass, and we needed them. This was the third day after the battle and no enemy was in sight.

On this night the chiefs counciled again and The Sitting Bull advised flight. "Let us set our breasts to the west wind and not look back," he said. "The white man fills the East. Toward the setting sun are the buffalo. Let us make friends with all our red brethren and go among them, and live in peace."

But the old men were timid. They said: "We do not know the land to the west; it is all very strange to us. It is said to be filled with evil creatures. The mountains reach to the sky. The people are strong as bears and will destroy us. Let us remain among the Crows whom we know. Let us make treaty with them."

To this the chief at last agreed, and gave orders to be ready to march early the next morning. "When a man's heart beats with fear it is a good thing to keep moving," he said to my father.

Thus began a retreat which is strange to tell of, for we retraced our trail over the low divide back into the valley of the Rosebud, and so down the Yellowstone to the Missouri, ready to enter upon our exile. It was all new territory to most of us. Our food was gone, and when our hunters brought news of buffalo ahead we rushed forward joyously, keeping to the north, and so entered the land of the Crows.

Meanwhile the white soldiers had also retreated. They didn't know where we were. Perhaps they were afraid we would suddenly strike them on the flank. Anyhow, they withdrew and filled the

East (as I afterward learned) with lies about us and our chiefs. They said the chief had four thousand warriors, that he was accompanied by a white soldier, and many other foolish things.

Our people rejoiced now, and at The Sitting Bull's advice our band broke up into small parties, the better to hunt and prepare meat for winter. It was easier to provide food when divided into small groups, and so my chief's great "army," as the white men called it, scattered, to meet again later.

It must have been in October that we came together, and in the great council which followed, the chief announced that the white soldiers were coming again and that it was necessary to push on to the north. This was on the Milk River, and there you may say the last stand of the Sioux took place—for it was in this council that the hearts of the Ogallallahs, our allies, weakened. One by one their orators rose and said: "We are tired of running and fighting. We do not like this cold northland. We do not care to go farther. The new white-soldier chief is building a fort at Tongue River. He has many soldiers and demands our surrender. He has offered to receive us kindly."

My chief rose and with voice of scorn said: "Very well. If your hearts are water, if you desire to become white men, go!" And they rose and slipped away hastily and we saw them no more.

Then the Cheyennes said: "We, too, have decided to return to our own land. We dread the desolate north."

Then my chief was very sad, for the Cheyennes are mighty warriors. "Very well, my brothers," he replied. "You came of your own accord and we will not keep you. We desire your friendship. Go in peace."

So they left us. We were now less than half of our former strength, but we faced the north winds with brave hearts—even the women sang to cheer our way.

We were near the Missouri when Miles, the white chief, suddenly threw himself in our way and demanded a council.

A battle would have been very unequal at this time, for our warriors were few and our women and children many; therefore, The Sitting Bull and five chiefs went forth to meet Miles and his aides.

Perhaps you have read the white man's side of this. I will tell you of the red man's part, for my father rode beside our chief at this time.

Colonel Miles had over four hundred men and a cannon. His men were all armed perfectly, while we had less than a thousand men and boys, and many of even the men had no guns at all. We were burdened with the women and children, too.

Six white men met The Sitting Bull and his five braves. My father was one of these men and he told me what took place.

The chief rode forward slowly, and as he neared the white chief he greeted him quietly, then lifted his hands to the sky in a prayer to the Great Spirit. "Pity me, teach me. Give me wise words," he whispered.

"Which of you is The Sitting Bull?" asked Colonel Miles.

"I am," replied the chief.

"I am glad to meet you. You are a good warrior and a great leader."

To this my chief abruptly replied: "Why do you remain in my country? Why do you build a camp here?"

Thereupon Miles sternly answered: "We are under orders to bring you in. I do not wish to make war on you, but you must submit and come under the rule of the department at Washington."

The Sitting Bull made reply quietly, but with emphasis: "This country belongs to the red man and not to the white man. I do not care to make war on you. My people are weary of fighting and fleeing."

"Why do you not come in and live quietly on your reservation at the Standing Rock?"

"Because I am a red man and not an agency beggar. The bluecoats drove us west of the Missouri, they robbed us of the Black Hills, they have forced us to take this land from the Crows, but we wish to live at peace. You have no right to come here. You must withdraw all your troops and take all settlers with you. There never lived a paleface who loved a redskin, and no Lakota ever loves a paleface. Our interests are directly opposed. Only in trade can we meet in peace. I am Uncapappa and I desire to live the ways of my fathers in the valleys which the Great Spirit gave to my people. I have not declared war against Washington, but I will fight when you push me to the wall. I do not like to be at strife. It is not pleasant to be always fleeing before your guns. This western world is wide; it is lonely of human life. Why do you not leave it to us? All my days I have lived far from your people. All that I got of you I have paid for. My band owes you nothing. Go back to the sunrise and we will live as the Great Spirit ordained that we should do."

General Miles was much moved, but said: "I want you to go with me to meet the Great Father's representatives and talk with them."

"No," my chief replied. "I am afraid to do that, now that we have had a battle with your soldiers. We went far away and your warriors followed us. They fell upon us while we were unprepared. They shot our women and children and they burned our tepees. Then we fought, as all brave men should, and we killed many. I did not desire this, but so it came about. Do not blame me."

The white chief was silent for a time, then he said: "If you do not give up your arms and come upon the reservation I will follow you and destroy you."

At this my chief broke forth: "My friend, we had better quit talking while we are good-natured." Then lifting his arm in a powerful gesture, he uttered a great vow: "So long as there is a prairie dog for my children, or a handful of grass for my horses, The Sitting Bull will remain Uncapappa and a freeman." And he turned his horse about and returned to our lines.

During this time our spies had discovered the guns which Miles had pointed at the chief, and knew that the soldiers were ready to shoot our envoys down.

When the chief was told this he said: "No matter. We have held up our hands to the Great Spirit; we must not fire the first shot."

He was anxious for peace, for, while he was still the leader of many men, he knew something of the power of the War Department and he feared it. All that night he sat in council with the chiefs, who were gloomy and disheartened. Next morning, hearing that General Miles was coming toward his camp, The Sitting Bull sent out a white flag and asked for another talk. This Colonel Miles granted and they met again. My chief said:

"We have counseled on the matter and we have decided on these terms. We ask the abandonment of this our country by your soldiers. We ask that all settlements be withdrawn from our land, except trading posts, and our country restored to us as it was before the white settlers came. My people say this through me."

To this Miles harshly replied: "If you do not immediately surrender and come under the rule of the reservations, I will attack you and pursue you till you are utterly destroyed. I give you fifteen minutes to decide. At the end of that time I open fire."

Then the heart of my chief took flame. Shaking his hand at the soldiers, he whirled his horse, and came rushing back, shouting: "Make ready! The white soldiers are about to shoot!"

Under his orders I and other lads rushed to the front and began to fire the grass, thus making a deep smoke between us and the enemy. While the women hurriedly packed the tepees the men caught their horses. All was confusion and outcry. But our warriors held the enemy in check so that we got our camp out of harm's way. We were afraid of the big gun; we had little fear of the horsemen and their carbines.

For two days Miles pushed us and we gave way. The white historians are always ungenerous, if not utterly false. They do not give my people credit. Consider our disadvantages. Our women and children were with us and must be protected. It required many of the young men to take care of our ponies and the camp stuff. We were forced to live on game and game was scared away, while the white soldiers had rations and the best of horses. The country was not a good one for us. Hour by hour Miles pushed us, and in spite of all the skill of our chiefs, we lost most of our ponies and a great deal of our food and clothing, and our people became deeply disheartened. The rapid-fire gun of the white soldiers terrified us—and though the earth grew blacker and darker, we fled northward.

At last, on the third day, decisive council took place among the chiefs. The Sitting Bull and The Gall said, "We will not surrender!" But many of the lesser ones cried out: "What is the use? The white man is too strong. The country grows more barren, the game has fled. Let us make peace. Let us meet Miles again."

But my chief indignantly refused. "Are we coyotes?" he said. "Shall we slink into a hole and whine? You Yanktonaise and Minneconjous have eaten too much white man's bread. It has taken the heart out of you. Do you wish to be the sport of our enemies? Then go back to the agencies and grow fat on the scrap they will throw to you. As for me, I am Uncapappa, I will not submit. I owe the white race nothing but hatred. I do not seek war with Miles, but if he pursues me I will fight. My heart is hot that you are so cowardly. I will not take part in this peace talk. I have spoken."

Once again he rose, and spoke with the most terrible intensity, struggling to maintain his supremacy over his sullen and disheartened allies, but all in vain. He saw at last that his union of forces had been a failure, and, drawing his "Silent Eaters" around him, he sent criers through the camp calling on all those who wished to follow him to break camp.

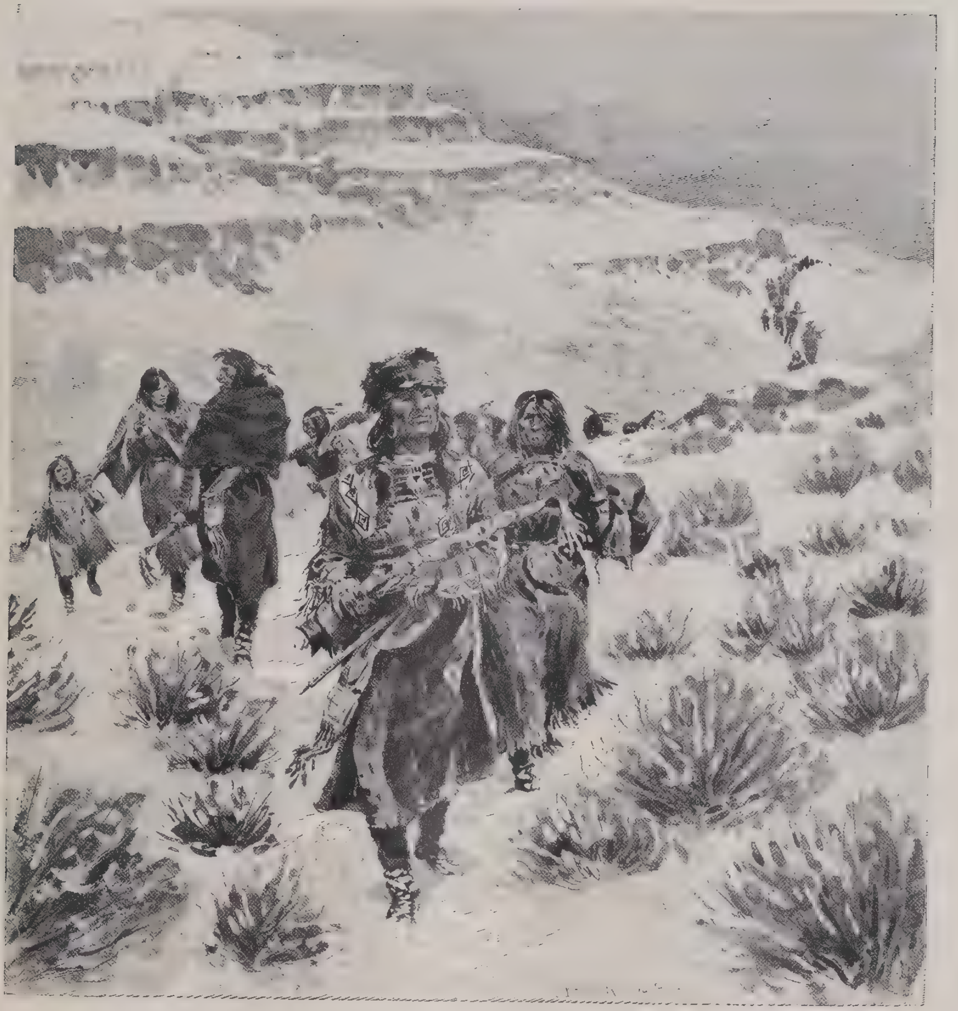
It was a solemn day for my race, a bitter moment for my chief.

He saw his bond of union crumbling away, becoming sand where he thought it steel. When Crazy Horse and the Cheyennes fell behind he could not complain, for they were but friends who had formed a temporary alliance, but the desertion of the Yanktonaise was a different matter. They were of his blood and were leaving us, not to fight, but to surrender. They were deserting us and all that we stood for. And my chief's heart was very sore as he saw them ride away. Less than two hundred lodges went with The Sitting Bull; the others surrendered.

It took heroic courage to set face to the north at that time of the year. The land was entirely unknown even to our guides, and the winter was upon us. It was treeless, barren, and hard as iron. As the snows fell our sufferings began. I have read the white historians' account of this. I have read in Miles's book his boasting words of the heroism of the white troops as they marched in pursuit of us in the cold and snow, but he does not draw attention to the fact that my chief and his people traversed the same road in the same weather, with scanty blankets and no rations at all. According to his own report his troops outnumbered us, man, woman, and child, and yet he did not reach, much less capture, a man of us.

Our side of all this warfare has never been told. You have all the newspapers, all the historians. Your officers dare not report the true number of the slain, and they always report the red men to be present in vast number. It would make the world smile to know the truth. You glorify yourselves at our cost, and we have thus far had no one to dispute you. I am only a poor "Injun," after all, and no one will read what I write, but I say the white soldiers could never defeat an equal number of my people on the same terms.

Our moccasins grew thin with our hurrying. We were always cold and hungry. No wood could be found. We burned our lodge poles. Our horses weakened and died and we had no meat. The buffalo had fled, there were no antelope, and the wind always

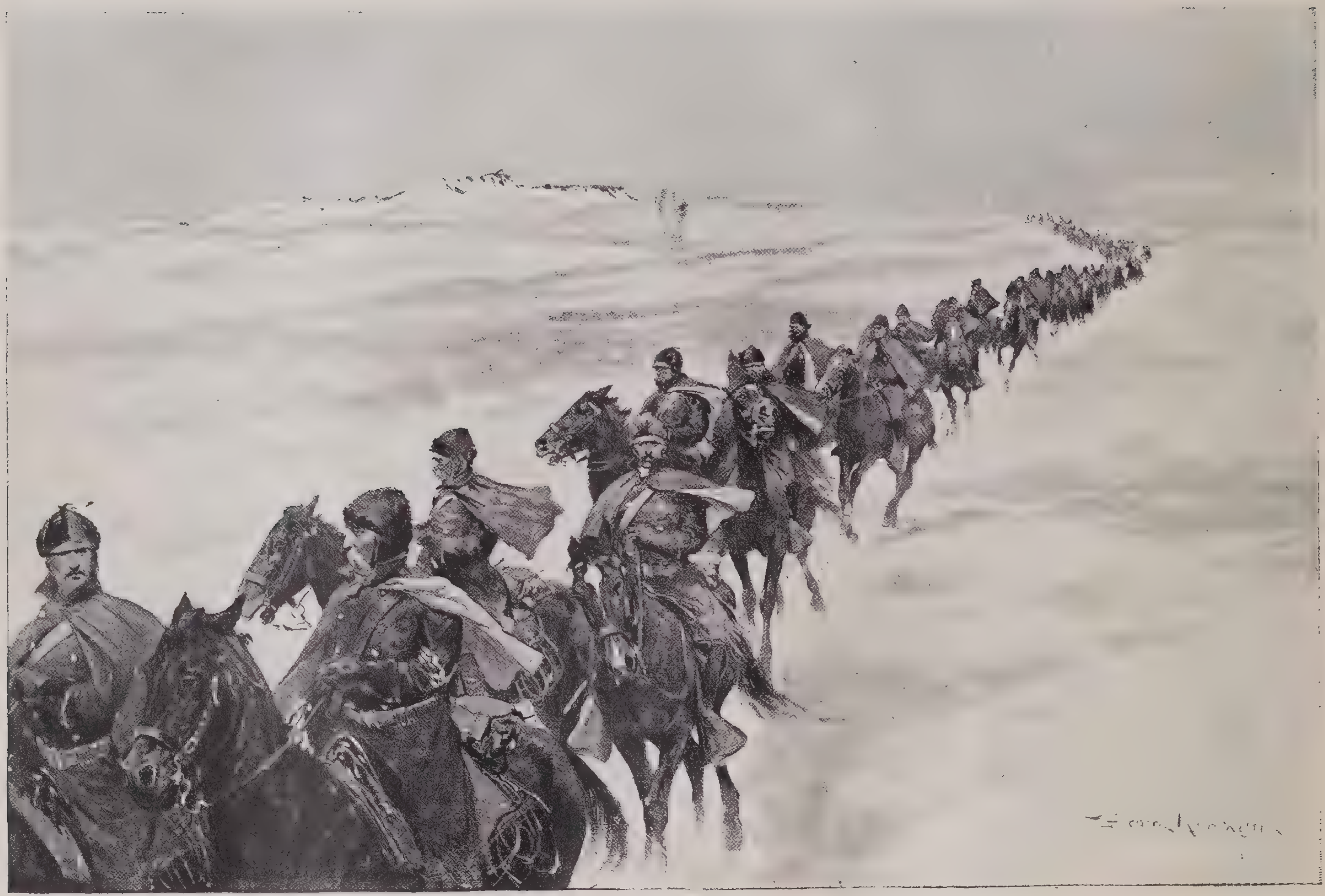


The Brave Cheyennes Were Running Through the Frosted Hills

This is Dull Knife's band of Northern Cheyennes, known as the Spartans of the plains. And deservedly were they called a Spartan band, for, relentlessly pursued by cavalry troops for over ten days, these gallant warriors fought to their last nerve, making their last stand only when nature itself was exhausted.

Illustration from
A SERGEANT OF THE ORPHAN TROOP
by Frederic Remington

Originally published in
HARPER'S MAGAZINE, *August, 1897*



Campaigning in Winter

A body of United States cavalry in winter rig in pursuit of a band of Minneconjoux Sioux, who had left their agency and were making for the camp of the hostiles in the Bad Lands.

Illustration from
A SERGEANT OF THE ORPHAN TROOP
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stung—yet we struggled on, cold, hungry, hearing the wails of our children and the cries of our women, pushing for a distant valley where our scouts had located game.

At last the enemy dropped behind and we went into camp near the mouth of the Milk River on the Big Muddy, and soon were warm and fed again, but our hearts were sore for the unburied dead that lay scattered behind us in the snow. Do you wonder that our hate of you was very great?

There we remained till spring. The soldiers had been relentless in pursuit until the winter shut down; after that they, too, went into camp and we lived in peace, recuperating from our appalling march. And day by day The Sitting Bull sat in council with his "Silent Eaters."

Our immediate necessities were met, but the chief's heart was burdened with thought of the future. All our allies had fallen away. The Cheyennes and Ogallallahs were bravely fighting for their land in the south, but the Yanktonaise and Minneconjous, our own blood, with small, cold hearts, were sitting, self-imprisoned, in the white man's war camp.

You must not forget that we had no knowledge of geography such as you have. We knew only evil of the land that lay to the north and west of us. We were like people lost in the night. Every hill was strange, every river unexplored. On every hand the universe ended in obscurity, like the lighted circle of a campfire. A little of the earth we knew; all the rest was darkness and terror.

We could not understand the government's motives. Your war chief's persistency and his skill scared us. We were without ammunition, we could neither make powder nor caps for our rifles, and our numbers were few. Miles had the wealth of Washington at his back. This you must remember when you read of wars upon us. Where we went our women and children were obliged to go, and this hampered our movements. What would Miles have done with five hundred women and children to transport and guard?

All these things made further warfare a hopeless thing for us, for we were dependent upon our enemy for ammunition and guns, without which the feeding of our people was impossible. To crown all our troubles, the buffalo were growing very wild and were retreating to the south.

Up to this time we had only temporary scarcity of food, but now, when we could not follow the buffalo in their migrations, my chief began to see that they might fail us at the very time we most needed them. "Surely the Great Spirit has turned his face from us," he said, as his scouts returned to say the buffalo were leaving the valley.

If you were to talk for a day, using your strongest words, you could not set forth the meaning of the buffalo to my people at this time. They were our bread and our meat. They furnished us roof and bed. They lent us clothing for our bodies. The chase kept us powerful, continent, and active. Our games, our dances, our songs of worship, and many of our legends had to do with these great cattle. They were as much a part of our world as the hills and the trees, and to our minds they were as persistent and ever-recurring as the grass.

To say "The buffalo will fail" was like saying "The sun will rise no more." Our world was shaken to its base when a red man began even to dream of this. We spoke of it with whispered words.

"To go farther north is to say farewell to the buffalo," the chief said to my father—and in this line you may read the despair of the greatest leader my tribe has produced. To go north was to face ever-deepening cold in a gameless, waterless, treeless land; to go south was to walk into the white chief's snare.

One day as the old men sat in council a stranger, a friendly half-breed from the north, rose and said:

"My friends, I have listened to your stories of hard fighting and running, and it seems to me you are like a lot of foxes whose dens have been shut tight with stones. The hunters are abroad and you have no place of refuge. Now to the north, in my country, there is a mysterious line on the ground. It is so fine you cannot see it; it is finer than a spider's web at dusk; but it is magical. On one side of it the soldiers wear red coats and have a woman chief. On the other they wear blue coats and obey Washington. Open your ears now—listen! No blue soldier dares to cross that line. This is strange, but it is true. My friends, why do you not cross this wonder-working mark? There are still buffalo up there and other game. There is a trader not three days' ride from here, one who buys skins and meat. There you can fill your powder cans and purchase guns. Come with me. I will show the way."

As he drew this alluring picture loud shouts of approval rang out. "Let us go!" they said one by one. "We are tired of being hunted like coyotes."

The chief smoked in silence for a long time, and then he rose and his voice was very sad as he chanted: "I was born in the valley of the Big Muddy River. I love my native land, I dread to leave it, but the pale soldiers have pushed us out and we are wanderers. I have listened to our friend. I should like to believe him, but I cannot. White people are all alike. They are all forked and wear trousers. They will treat us the same no matter what color of coats they wear. If any of you wish to go I will not hinder. As for me, I am not yet weak in the knees, I can still run, and I can still fight when need comes. I have spoken."

Part of the people took the advice of the Cree and went across the line, but The Sitting Bull remained in the valley of the Missouri till the spring sun took away the snow.

IV

DARK DAYS OF WINTER

I SHALL never forget that dreadful winter. It seems now like one continuous whirling storm of snow filled with wailing. We were cold and hungry all the time, and the white soldiers were ever on our trail. Many died and the cries of women never ceased. It was as if the Great Spirit had forgotten us.

The chief, satisfied at last that the Cree had told the truth and despairing of the future, turned his little band to the north, and in the early spring crossed the line near the head of Frenchman's Creek and camped close to the hill they call Wood Mountain, where the redcoats had a station and a small store. No one would have known this small, ragged, sorrowful band as "the army of The Sitting Bull."

My father was a great man—as great in his way as his chieftain—but he was what you call a philosopher. He spoke little, but he thought much, and one day soon after this he called me to him and said: "My son, you have seen how the white man puts words on bits of paper. It is now needful that some one of us do the same. We are far from our home and kindred. You must learn to put signs on paper like the white man in order that we may send word to those we have left behind. I have been talking with a black-robe (a priest) and to-morrow you go with him to learn the white man's wonderful sign language."

My heart froze within me to hear this, and had I dared I would have fled out upon the prairie; but I sat still, saying no word, and my father, seeing my tears, tried to comfort me. "Be not afraid, my son. I will visit you every day."

"Why can't I come home each night?" I asked.

"Because the black-robe says you will learn faster if you live with him. You must travel this road quickly, for we sorely need your help."

He took me to Father Julian and I began to read.

We lived here peacefully for two years. The Cree had told us the truth. General Miles dared not cross the line, but he chased my people whenever they ventured over it. At Wolf Point, on the Missouri, was a trader who spoke our language (he had an Indian wife) and with him my chief often talked. He had spies also at

Fort Peck, which was an agency for the Assiniboines, and so knew where the soldiers were at all times.

I had a friend, a Cree, who could read the papers, and from them I learned what the white people said of us. Through him I heard that many people sympathized with The Sitting Bull and declared that it was right to defend one's native land.

These words pleased the chief, but it made two of his head men bitter. They grew jealous because their names were not spoken by the white man, and they would have overthrown my chief if they dared, but now the "Silent Eaters" came to his aid. With them to guard him, the chief could treat the jealous ones with contempt. Wherever he went my father and others of his bodyguard went with him, so that no traitor could kill him and sell his head to the white people.

The redcoats liked my chieftain well. He was always just and peaceful. If a reckless young man did a wrong thing against the settlers The Sitting Bull punished him and said: "A righteous man does not strike the hand which saves him from the wolf. No one can steal from these our friends and not be punished."

Once when he went to visit the trader at Wolf Point I went with him, and was present at a long talk which they held. The trader gave us a tent and some food and at night when we had eaten he came and sat down to smoke.

"Sitting Bull," he began, "I cannot understand you. I cannot see as you do. We white people look ahead, we ask ourselves what is going to happen in the future; but you seem to go on blindly. My friend, what do you intend to do?"

The chief considered this carefully, but said nothing.

The trader went on: "The buffalo will soon be gone—you can see that. The cold is killing them and the guns of the white hunters crack, crack all the time. What will you do when they are gone?"

The chief broke forth passionately: "I did not leave the Black

Hills of my own will; the soldiers pushed me out. I loved my home, but the paleface came and with his coming all the old things began to change. I kept out of his way, I did not seek war with him, but he never slept till he drove me among the redcoats. The redcoats do not say much to us, but what they speak is fair and straight. So long as a gopher remains on the plains I will stay and I will fight. All my life I have been a man of peace, but now my back is to the rock; I shall run no more. I am not afraid to die and all my warriors are of my mind."

The trader replied: "Your people are poor and suffering. The Canadian government cannot help you. Our Great Father is rich. He will take care of you and your people. Why don't you do as the Yanktonaise did—go to a reservation and settle down."

"Because I am a red man. If the Great Spirit had desired me to be a white man he would have made me so in the first place. He put in your heart certain wishes and plans, in my heart he put other and different desires. Each man is good in His sight. It is not necessary for eagles to be crows. Now we are poor, but we are free. No white man controls our footsteps. If we must die we will die defending our rights. In that we are all agreed. This you may say to the Great Father for me."

The trader waited till the chief's emotion passed away, and then he said: "Look you, my friend, all white men are not your enemies. There are many who are on your side."

"I cannot trust them. A few months ago some men came professing friendship; they offered me land and a house, but I fear all those who come bearing gifts. I will trade; I will not take gifts. I do not make war; I only defend my women and children as you would do."

The trader rose. "Very well. I have said all I care to say on that head, but I shall be glad to see you at any time and I wish to trade with you."

"Will you trade guns?"

"No, I can't do that."

"If we kill game we must have guns."

"I know that, but I fear the soldiers as well as you, chief. They tell me not to sell you guns, and I must obey."

The Sitting Bull rose and took from his side his embroidered tobacco pouch.

"You are of good heart and I will trade with you." He handed the pouch to the trader, for this is an emblem of respect among my people, and they shook hands and parted. If all men had been like this man, we would not now be an outcast race.

All that autumn while I studied the white man's books my people camped not far away and traded at Wolf Point. It was well they did, for the winter set in hard. The cold became deadly and they had few robes. They were forced to sell all they had to buy food and ammunition. It is a terrible thing to be hungry in a land of iron. Do you wonder that we despaired?

Just when the winter was deep with snow a messenger came to warn us that a great military expedition was on its way to catch The Sitting Bull and his people. The chief immediately gave orders to pack, and with stern face again led the way to the north across the Great Divide. The white soldiers had plenty of blankets and food. They followed us hard. The storms were incessant. The snow, swept to and fro by the never-resting wind, blinded the eyes of the scouts and path finders.

Oh, that terrible march! In the gullies the horses floundered and fell to rise no more. There was no tree to shelter a tepee, no fuel for our fire. Women froze their arms and breasts, and little children died of cold and hunger. The camp grew each day more silent. The dogs were killed for food, and each night the lodge poles were cut down to make kindling, till each tepee became like a child's toy. The guides lost their way in the storm and the whole camp wandered desperately in a great circle. My words cannot picture to you the despair and suffering of that march.

When at last they came into the old camp at Wood Mountain they were bleeding, ragged, and hollow eyed with hunger. The Sitting Bull looked like an old man. The commander hardly recognized him, so worn and broken was he, and I, who remembered him as the proud leader of two thousand lodges of people, was made sorrowful and bitter by the change in his face.

That winter was the coldest known to my people. They sat huddled over their camp fires in the storms, while hunters ranged desperately for game. The redcoats helped us as much as they could, and strangers far away, hearing of our need, sent a little food and some clothing, but, in spite of all, many of our old people died.

Hunting parties rode forth desperately to the south, and some of them never returned. The buffalo were few and very, very distant, and our scouts from the Yellowstone reported whole herds already frozen. Myriads were starving because of the deep snow. "By spring none will remain," they said. "Surely the Great Spirit has turned his face away from his red sons."

The sufferings of the children broke the proud hearts of the chiefs. One by one they began to complain. Some of them reproached The Sitting Bull and there were those who would have delivered his head to the white men, but were prevented by the "Silent Eaters," who were ever watchful.

Many now said: "Let us go back. The buffalo are gone. We are helpless and our children starve while our brethern at the Standing Rock have plenty and are warm. We are tired of fighting and fleeing. The Great Spirit is angry with us. He has withdrawn his favor and we must do as Washington wishes. We must eat his food and do his work. He is all powerful. It is useless to hold out longer.'

To all this the chief made no reply, but brooded darkly, talking only in the soldier's lodge. His mind was busy with the problems of life and death which the winter wind sang into his ears.

From my warm home with the priest, from the comfort and security which I was just beginning to comprehend and enjoy, I went now and again into the camp, and the pity of it was almost more than I could bear. No one talked, no one sang, no one smiled. It was like some dreadful dream of the night.

What could I do? I had nothing. I ate, but I could not carry food to my chief. I had warm clothing, but I could not lend it to my father. Though hardly more than a boy, my heart was big as that of a man. I began to understand a little of the mighty spread of the white man's net, and yet I dared not tell the chief my secret thought.

How can I make you understand? Can you not see that we were facing the end of our world? My chief was confronting captivity and insult and punishment. His bright world of danger and freedom and boundless activity was narrowing to a grave, and only the instinctive love of life kept him and his "Silent Eaters" from self-destruction. In all the history of the world there has been no darker day for a race than this when midwinter fell upon us in that strange land of the north.

V

THE CHIEF SURRENDERS HIMSELF

The first days of spring were worse than the winter. Rain and sleet followed each other, and the few remaining buffalo seemed to sink into the ground, so swiftly they disappeared. White people read in papers of wars and elections and the price of wheat; our news came by brave runners, and their tales were ever of the same dole.

"What of the buffalo? Where are the buffalo? Are the buffalo starving?" The answers always were the same. "The buffalo are gone. We are lost!"

The report of our desperate condition went out over the world and sympathetic people came to urge us to surrender. One messenger, a priest, a friend of General Sherman, the great war chief, came, and The Sitting Bull called a council to sit with him, and some Canadian officers also were there.

After they had all finished speaking, The Sitting Bull replied: "I am ready to make a peace. But as for going to Standing Rock, that is a question I must consider a long time. I am no fool. I know that the man who kills me will be rewarded and I do not intend to be taken prisoner. I have long understood the power of the whites. I am like a fly in a mountain stream when compared with this wonderful and cruel race. I do not care to have my head sold to make some man-coyote rich. Now this is my answer: I will make a peace. I will keep my people in order but I will not go to the Standing Rock. My children can go if they think best."

The council broke up at this point, but in private the chief said to a friend: "The Gall is going back, so is The Polar Bear and many others. I shall soon be alone. Black Moon, Running Crane, all are deserting me, but I shall remain; I will not return to die foolishly for the white man's pleasure."

All took place as he foresaw. Chief Gall went south and surrendered. So did Red Fish and The Crane. Only a few remained, among them my father and Slohan.

The chief was pleased to know I was getting skilled in the white man's magic. "I need an interpreter, one I can trust," he said to me. "Go on in the road you have taken."

One day as he sat smoking in his tepee I heard him singing in a low voice the "Song of the Chieftains," but he had changed it to a sad ending:

"I was born a soldier—
I have lived thus long.
Ah, I have lived to spend my days in poverty."

It broke my heart to look upon him sitting there. I had seen him when he was the master spirit of the whole Sioux nation—a proud and confident chief. Now he hovered above his fire, singing a death song, surrounded by a little circle of ragged lodges. Yet

I could not blame his followers. They surrendered, not to the white man, but to the great forces of hunger and cold.

If you ask what defeated The Sitting Bull, I will answer, "The passing of the buffalo." If you ask what caused him to surrender his body to the whites, I will say his tender heart. You hear officers boast of conquering Sitting Bull, but the one who brought him to the post was his daughter. The love of the parent for the child is strong in my race; it is terrible. Sitting Bull was a chief, stern and resolved, but he was a father also.

One day a letter came to the British officer from a friend of my chieftain, who said, "Tell The Sitting Bull that the white men have put his daughter in irons."

This daughter, his best-beloved child, had left the camp, lured away by her lover, and the chief did not know where she was. His heart was bleeding for her, and now when he heard this letter read his indignation was very great. "Is it so?" he cried out. "Do they make war on a poor weak girl? I will go to her. I will kill her captors. I will die beside her."

That night he called the remnant of his band together and said, "My children, you know that the white men have tried often to get me to go south to act their pleasure, but I have always refused. Now they have taken my daughter, a weak girl with no power to defend herself. They have put irons on her feet and on her hands. At last I must go south. I must follow her. I wish to find her and to kill those who have abused her. I do not want you to go with me. I go alone to suffer whatsoever comes to me."

Then his people all said, "No, we will go with you."

He replied: "Friends, you have stayed too long with me. If you wish to go I cannot refuse, but the road is dark and dangerous; whereto it leads I cannot tell."

We made ready at once to go with him, and though our hearts were filled with fear, we were also glad. "We're going home," the women sang. For the last time he gave orders to break camp in

Canadian territory, and led the way across the invisible wonderful line into the land of the bluecoats.

His following was very small now. Only his wives and sons and a few of the more loyal of the "Silent Eaters" remained. Many of even this bodyguard had gone away, but those who remained were doubly faithful, and on them he relied to resent any indignity. "If we are assaulted let us die fighting, as becomes warriors," he said, and all the men responded firmly, "Aye, that will we."

Do you think it an easy thing to set your face toward the land of your deadly foes, with only a handful of warriors to stand between you and torture? Yet this is what my chieftain did. He knew the hate and the fear in which the white man held him, for I could now read to him and report to him what was said. He was aware of the price on his head and that many men were eager to put him in chains; yet he went.

"I shall go to the white soldiers," he said. "*They* will know about my daughter. They are warriors, and warriors respect a chieftain."

Small as his escort was, the commander at Fort Buford respected it. He received The Sitting Bull like a chief, and said, "I have orders to take you as military prisoner to Fort Yates."

"I know the road home," my chief haughtily replied. Then he handed his gun to me and added, in a milder tone: "I do not come in anger toward the white soldiers. I am very sad. My daughter went this road. Her I am seeking. I will fight no more. I do not love war. I never was the aggressor. I fought only to defend my women and children. Now all my people wish to return to their native land. Therefore I submit." My heart ached to hear him say this, but it was true.

The colonel was very courteous. "You shall be treated as one soldier treats another," he said. "In two days a boat will come to take you back to your people at Standing Rock. It is easy to ride on a boat and you will have plenty to eat and I will send a guard to see that you are not harmed by anyone."

Thereupon he showed us where to camp and issued rations to us, and, as we were all hungry, his kindness touched our hearts.

On the second day he came to see the chief again: "The boat has come to carry you to Standing Rock. I hope you will go quietly and take your place among your people who are living on their ancient hunting grounds near the Grand River."

"I do not wish to be shut up in a corral," replied The Sitting Bull. "It is bad for the young men to be fed by the agent. It makes them lazy and drunken. All the agency Indians I have ever seen were worthless. They are neither red warriors nor white farmers. They are neither wolf nor dog. But my followers are weary of being hungry and cold. They wish to see their brothers and their old home on the Missouri, therefore I bow my head."

Soon after this we went aboard the ship and began to move down the river.

Some of us hardly slept at all, so deeply excited were we by the wonder of the boat, but the chief sat in silence, smoking, speaking only to remark on some change in the landscape or to point out some settler's cabin or a herd of cattle. "Our world—the Indian's world—is almost gone," he muttered. But no one knew as well as I how deeply we were penetrating the white man's civilization.

We all became excited as the boat neared Bismarck, for there stood a large village of white people and men and women came rushing out to see us. They laughed and shouted insulting words to the chief, and some of them called out, "Kill 'em!" The soldiers who guarded us kept them back and we went on unharmed, but I could see that the sight of this throng of palefaces had again made my chief very bitter.

I shall never forget the strange pain at my heart as we neared the high bluff which hides Fort Yates. I did not know how near we were till the old men pointed out the landmarks and began to sing a sad song:

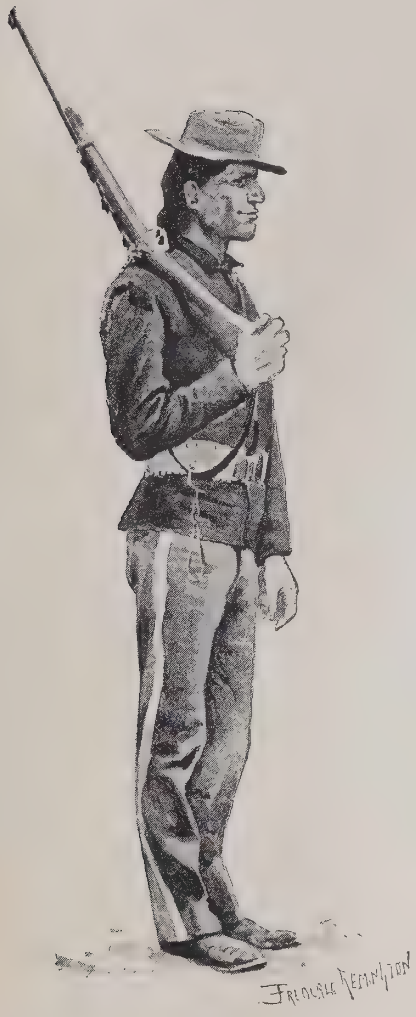
> "We are returning, my brothers—
> We are coming to see you,
> But we come as captives."

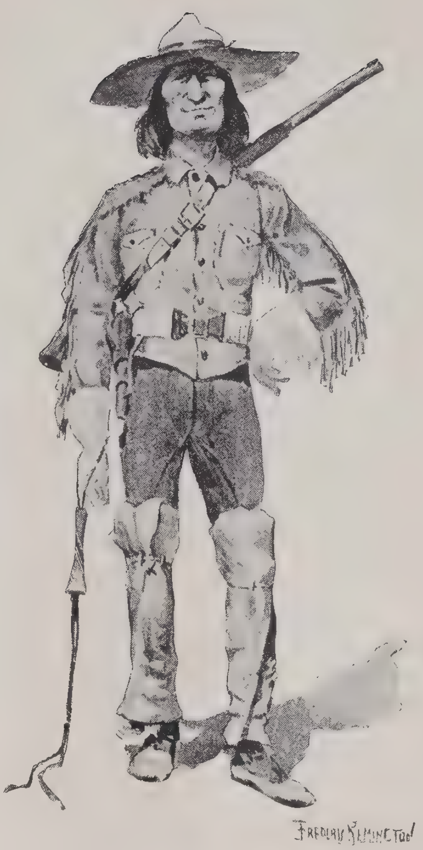
At last we came in sight of the fort, where a great crowd of people stood waiting to see us. It seemed as if all the Sioux tribes were there, all my chief's friends and all his enemies. Some laughed, some sang, some shouted to us. All on board were crazy with joy, but the chief did not change countenance; only by a quiver of his lips could his feelings be read. We saw The Gall and The Running Antelope and The Crow's Mane and many more of our friends. There were tears on the cheeks of these stern warriors and their hands were outstretched to greet us.

But the chief and my father were taken from the boat under military guard and no one was allowed to come near them. My mother and sister put up our tepee surrounded by the soldiers. Only a few were permitted to come in and see us.

The chief inquired anxiously for his daughter. One day she came, and when she passed into her father's lodge her face was hidden in her hands, her form shook with weakness. I could not hear what the chief said to her, for his voice was low and gentle, but when I saw her next she was smiling. He had forgiven her and was made happy by her promise to stay with him.

He was greatly chagrined to find himself held a prisoner in the face of all his people, and yet this care of his person—this fear of him on the white man's part—made some of his subordinates still more jealous of his eminence. They were forgotten, while many strangers came from afar and gave my chief many silver pieces for his photograph. His fame was greater than even I could realize, and chiefs who had no reason to hate him began to speak against him. "Why should the white people send him presents?" they asked, and began to belittle his position in the tribe.



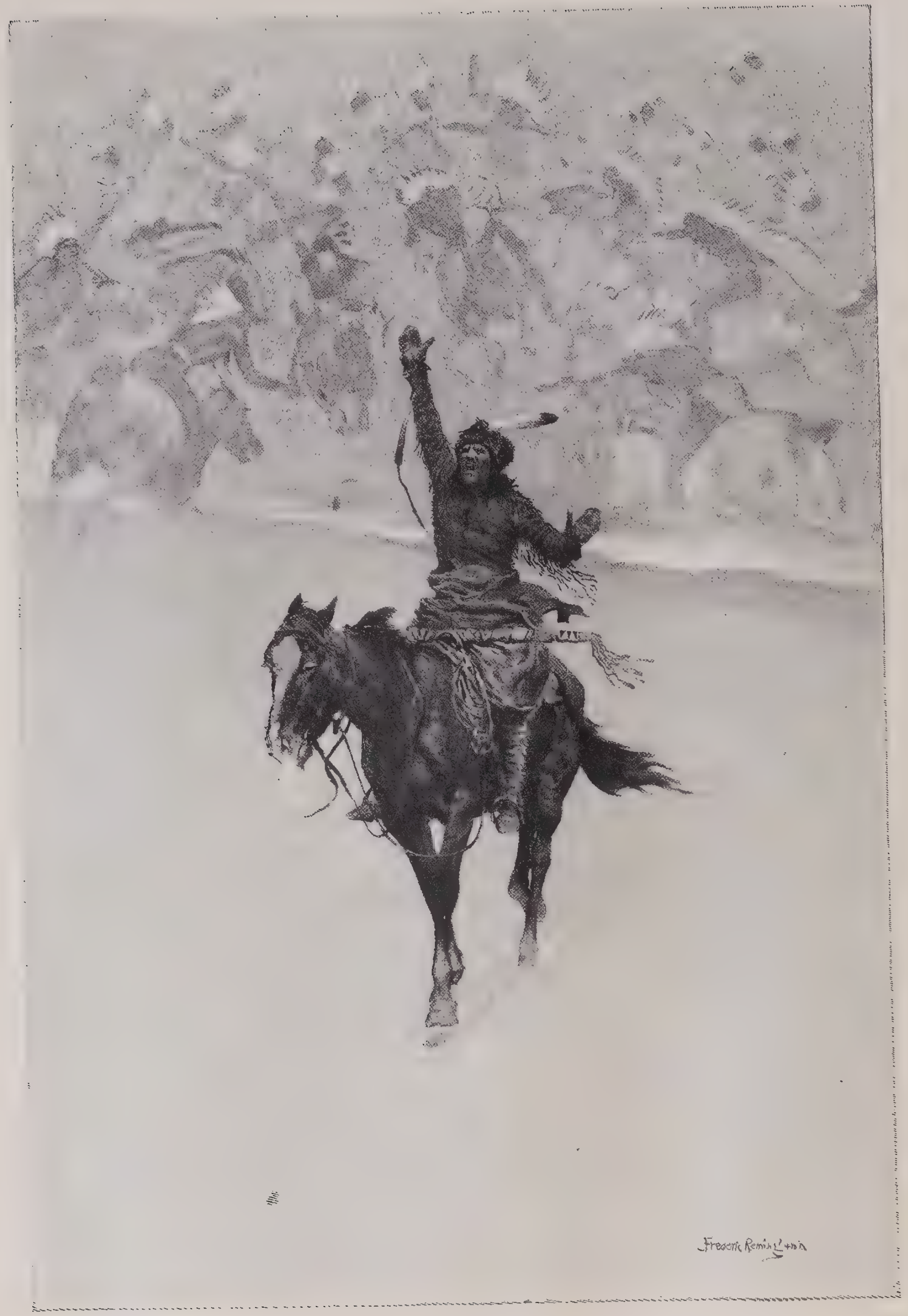


Indians as Soldiers

To the Indian, it was the soldier—the man in blue uniform—not the civil agents sent out from Washington to dole out bad and insufficient rations to a conquered race, that represented courage, justice, and truth. Consequently the Indians took great pride in being soldiers, and experience has shown that they make not only the most efficient but also the most faithful of scouts and the best possible material for light, irregular cavalrymen.

Illustrations from
INDIANS AS IRREGULAR CAVALRY
by Frederic Remington

Originally published in
HARPER'S WEEKLY, *December 27, 1890*


Frederic Remington

An Indian Dream

Illustration from
HOW ORDER No. 6 WENT THROUGH
by Frederic Remington

Originally published in
HARPER'S MAGAZINE, *May, 1898*

I do not think my chief counseled evil during this time, but it could not be said that he was submissive. He merely waited in his tepee the action of his captors. The news that he got of the condition of the reservation was not such as to encourage him and the roar of his falling world was still in his ears. He was not yet in full understanding of the purpose of Washington. "I do not know whether I am to live or die," he said to my father. "Whatsoever my fate, I am happier, now that I have seen my child."

After some three weeks of this confinement we were startled by an order to break camp and get on board the boat again. "You are to go to Fort Randall as military prisoners," the agent explained to me. "Tell them these are my orders."

When I told the chief he was greatly troubled and, calling his "Silent Eaters" about him, he said: "This may mean that they are going to take us into the mysterious East to kill us in sport, or to starve us in prison, far from our kind. Now listen, be ready! Our reservation ends at Fort Randall. If they attempt to carry us beyond that point let each man snatch a soldier's gun and fight. Let no one cease battle till the last man of us is killed. I am old and broken, but I am still a chief. I will not suffer insult and I will not be chained like a wolf for the white man's sport."

All agreed to this plan, and as the boat neared the fort the chief gave the word, and we were scattered, tense with resolution, ready to begin our death struggle should the vessel pass beyond the line. No one faltered. Nearer and nearer we floated, and all were expecting the signal when the boat signaled to the shore and stopped. The soldiers never knew how close they came to death on that day.

Again we went into camp under guard, well cared for by the soldiers. The officers all treated The Sitting Bull with marked respect and during the day the colonel himself came to sit and smoke and talk with us.

Of him the chief abruptly asked, "Am I to be kept here all my life?"

"No. After a while you are to be sent back north. As soon as you are prepared to sign a peace and after the anger of the whites dies out. I do not hate you. Come and talk to me whenever you feel lonesome, I will do all I can to make your stay pleasant."

To this The Sitting Bull replied: "Your kindness makes my heart warm. It gives me courage to tread the new paths that lie before me. I am very sad and distrustful, for I am like a man who enters a land for the first time. It is not easy for me to sit down as a prisoner and dream out the future. It is all dark to me. You are my friend. You are wise and your words have helped me. If we could have the aid of men like you, the new road would be less fearsome to our feet."

The young officers came and asked us many questions about our ways of camping, our methods of fighting, and so on, and the chief was always ready to talk. Sometimes I pretended not to understand English in order that I might the better know what was being said, and often I heard white people tell ridiculous things.

"Is *that* The Sitting Bull? Why, he looks like an old woman. He can't be a warrior." Others remarked, "What a sad face he has!" and this was true, for he had grown old swiftly. He brooded much and there were days when he spake no word to any one, not even to my father.

These were days of enlightenment to me, as well as to my chief, but they brought no sign of hope. My father was a kind man, naturally cheerful and buoyant, and his eyes were quick to see all that the white man did. He comprehended as well as my chief the overwhelming power of the white man, but he was less tenacious of the past. "It is gone," he repeated to me privately. "The world of our fathers is swallowed up. Go you, my son, and learn of the white man the secret power that enables him to make carts and powder and rifles. How can we fight him when we must trade with him to win his wonder-working arms and ammunition?"

And so when one of the officers, Lieutenant Davies, saw me holding a scrap of paper and asked me if I could read, I told him I could. Thereafter he gave me books and helped me to understand them. We called him "Blackbird," because his mustaches were dark and shaped like the wings of a bird. I came to love this man, for he was the best paleface I ever knew. He did not condemn us because we were red. He did not boast and he was a soldier. He talked much with The Sitting Bull, and his speech did more to change my chief's mind than that of any other man.

"Submit to all that the White Father demands," he advised, "for so it is ordered in the world. It is not a question of right, or of the will of the Great Spirit," he went on; "it is merely a question of cannon and food." There was something appalling in the way in which he said these things. He did not believe in any Great Spirit. I could not understand his religion, but his mind was large and his heart gracious.

"Knowledge is power," he said to me. "Study, acquire wisdom, the white man's wisdom, then you will be able to defend the rights of your people," and his words sank deep into my heart.

For two years we lived here under his influence, until one day the order came for us to go back up the river, and with glad hearts we obeyed.

It was in the spring and there was joy in our blood, for these years of close captivity had made the promise of life on the reservation seem almost like freedom. We went back laughing for joy, and when we again came in sight of the hill above the Standing Rock my father lifted his hands in prayer and the women sang a song of joy. As soon as we were released my chief called his old guard about him, and said:

"My sons, my mind has changed. We are now entering upon a new life. The white man's trail is broad and dusty before us. The buffalo are entirely gone and we must depend on the fruit of the earth. You observe that The Eagle Killer, The Fire Heart and many of our people have oxen and wagons. If they did not come into possession of these things by shooting them out of the sky, I think we shall be able to acquire similar goods for ourselves. The white people have promised that so long as grass grows and water runs we shall be unmolested here. Let us live in peace with our neighbors."

The Sitting Bull was chief because he could do many things, and, though he was now a captive with his people, his power and influence remained. His "Silent Eaters" gathered round him and to them his words were law. The agent also, for a time, treated him with consideration, and was very friendly. They spoke often together.

We were at once given oxen and carts and located near the agency, where we lived for a year, but the chief longed to return to the Grand River, his native valley, and finally the agent gave his consent, and we moved to the river flat, just where the Rock Creek comes in. Here he built a little log cabin and settled down to live like a white man, but I could see that his heart was ever soaring to the hills of the West and his thoughts were busy with the past. Truly it was strange to see Gall and Crane and Slohan sitting in a small cabin, talking of the brave, free days of old.

VI

IN CAPTIVITY

Of what took place on the reservation during the next four years I know but little directly, for I went away to Washington to study with Lieutenant Davies, who was assigned to duty in the War Department, and I did not return to the Standing Rock for many years. I heard now and then from my father, who wrote through my friend Louie Primeau. He told me that the chief was living quietly at Rock Creek, but that he was opposing every attempt of the white man to buy our lands.

My father complained also of the decreasing rations and said: "The agent's memory is short; he has forgotten that these rations are in payment for land. He calls them gifts." My mother sent word that my little sister had died and that many were sick of lung diseases. "We are very cold and hungry in the winter," she said, and my heart bled with remorse, for I was warm and well fed.

I would have returned at once had not my friend Davies told me to stay on and learn all I could. "Go to the top," he said. "Do not halt in the middle of the trail. You will need to be very wise to help your people."

He was a philosopher. He had no hate of any race. He looked upon each people as the product of its conditions, and he often said, "The plains Indian was a perfect adaptation of organism to environment till the whites disturbed him."

His speech and his thought are in all that I write. He taught me to put down my words simply and without rhetoric. He gave me books to read that were both right and honest, and in all things he was truthful. "Your life can never be happy," he said. "You will always be a red man in the clothing of the whites, but you will find a pleasure in defending your people. Your race needs both historian and defender. Your whole life should be one of teaching your people how to live and how to avoid pain. I am not educating you to be happy. There can be no shirking your duty. On the contrary, I believe your only way to secure a moment's peace of mind after you return to your tribe is to help them bear their burdens."

He warned me of the change which had come to me, as to them. "Your boyish imagination idealized your people and the life they led. You saw them under heroic conditions. They are now poor and despairing and you will be shocked at their appearance and position under the agent, but do not let this dismay you. The race is there beneath its rags and dirt, a wonderful race."

I shall never forget those long talks we had in his study, high up in his little house, for he was not rich. Sometimes I could not sleep for the disturbing new thoughts which he gave me. Often he nullified all the teaching of the schools by some quiet remark.

"I counsel you to be a Sioux, my boy," he repeated to me one night after I had been singing some of our songs for a group of his friends. "You can never be a Caucasian. There are dusky corners in your thought. The songs you sang to-night made your heart leap with memories of the chase. A race is the product of conditions, the result of a million years of struggle. I do not expect a red man to become a white man. Those who do, know nothing of the human organism. On the surface I can make some change; but deep down your emotions, your superstitions are red and always must be; that is not a thing to be ashamed of."

I am giving this glimpse into my school days in order that my understanding of my chief and my race may appear plain. It is due to my good friend Davies, the noblest white I ever knew. I want everyone to know how much I owe to him.

It was strange to me and very irritating to find what false ideas of us and of our chief the Washington people held. When it became known that I was a Sioux and had been with The Sitting Bull, many were eager to question me about him, but I refused to do more than say: "We fought for our lands as Washington fought for his. Now you confine my chief as if he were a wolf. But he is a wise and gentle man, a philosopher, therefore he has laid his hands to the plow. His feet are in the white man's road."

This story is not of me, else I could tell you how beautiful some of the white women came to seem to me, and one small girl, fair as a spring flower, ensnared my heart and kept me like an eagle bound to my perch—only I did not struggle against the golden cord that bound me. It was all very strange to me, for I still loved a girl of my own race, who sent me presents of moccasins and who wrote through Louis to say she was waiting for me. It was strange, I say—for my heart clung to Anita also, she was so fair and slender and sweet. She was associated with all the luxury and mystery of the white man's life. She called to me in new ways—ways that scared me—while Oma spoke to something deeper in me—something akin to the wide skies, the brown hills, the west wind, and the smell of the lodge fire.

How it would have ended I don't know, had not my friend Davies been sent again into the West. His going ended my stay in the East. Without him I was afraid to remain among the white people.

"The time has come for you to return, Iapi," he said to me. "The white men are moving to force a treaty upon the Sioux, and now is your time to help them."

It was very hard to say good-by to my friend, and harder yet to my Anita, who loved me, but who told me she could not go with me, though she wished to do so. "I cannot leave my poor mother, who is sick and poor," she said.

I was not very wise, but I knew that I had no place, not even a lodge, in which to keep her, and so I said: "I will go on before you and prepare a place for you, and then sometime you will come and you will help me to teach my people how to live?"

To this she gave me promise and I went away very sad, for it seemed a long way from Standing Rock to Washington, and especially to a poor Sioux who knew of no way to earn money.

Some friends joined with my friend, the white soldier chief, to buy some clothes for me, and a few presents for my father and mother, and so, with a heart so big I thought it would burst within me, I took the cars for the West.

I sat without moving for hours—all night long—while the terrible engine of the white man's fashioning sped into the darkness. At dawn I looked out anxiously to see if the land were familiar, but it was not. Only on the third day did it begin to awaken echoes in my brain. My command of English words will not permit me to express the wild thrill of my heart as I looked out of my window and saw again the wide-lying plains of Dakota, marked by the feet of the vanished buffalo. I was getting home!

Five years is a long time when it involves such mental changes as had come to me. It seemed that half a lifetime had passed since

I sorrowfully took the steamer to go down the river to learn the white man's language. I was a wild-eyed, long-haired lad then. Now I was returning, clipped and clothed like a white man, yet in my heart a Sioux.

There were changes in the country, but not so great as I had expected. Even the white man makes but little mark on these arid levels. The cabins were grayer, the fields a little larger, that was all. After dispossessing my people and destroying the buffalo, the white settlers had discovered that it was a grim country for their uses. Their towns seemed small and poor and sad.

My heart came into my throat as I crossed the Cannonball and entered upon Sioux land and saw the yellowed tepees of our cousins, the Yanktonaise, scattered irregularly along the river. This was still the land of my fathers; this much we had retained of all the bright world which had been ours in the olden, splendid days!

It was in June and the grass was still green. Herds of ponies were feeding on the swells, and one of the horses I drove lifted his head and neighed; he, too, remembered the old freedom. The sky blazed with light and the hills quivered as if in ecstasy of living. The region was at its best, delusively beautiful. I knew its moods. I knew how desolate and pitiless those swells could be in midwinter, how dry and hot of breath in July.

As we topped the hill I met a man driving a small team to a heavy wagon. He wore a wide hat which lay on his shoulders, and big smoked goggles hid his eyes. As he came opposite I perceived that he was a Sioux, and I called to him in my native tongue.

"Wait, my friend. Where are you going so fast?"

He turned his big glasses on me and said:

"First of all, who are you that speak Lakota so badly?"

"I am Iapi, the son of Shato."

"Ah!" he exclaimed, with a smile. "In that case you are getting back from school? I know you, for I am Red Thunder!"

Red Thunder! I was silent with astonishment. A picture of him as I saw him in 1876 rose in my mind. Tall and lithe he was then, with keen, fierce eyes, the leader of the war faction among the Yanktonaise, a wonderful horseman, reckless and graceful. Now here he sat in a white man's wagon, bent in the shoulders and clad in badly fitting agency clothing. My heart was sick as I said:

"Friend, you are changed since the council on the Powder River. I did not know you."

He took off his glasses and put aside his hat; his smile also passed away. He looked away to the west:

"My son, that is long ago and Red Thunder's blood is no longer made from buffalo meat. His muscles are weak. He prefers to sit in his wagon and drive his ponies. The Great Spirit has forgotten his red children and the White Father is in command over us. I do the best I can. The old trails are closed; only one remains—the one made by Washington."

I drove on, my exultation utterly gone. If Red Thunder was of this bitter mood, how would I find the Uncapappas who had been the conservatives of the tribe?

I passed close by some of the cabins and they disheartened me, they were so small and dirty. I was glad to see that some of them still retained the sweat lodge. Each home consisted of a shack and two or three tepees of canvas, and women were cooking beneath bowers made of cottonwood as of old. Their motions, and the smell of smoke, awoke such memories in me that I could hardly keep from both shouting and weeping.

The farther I went the more painful became the impression made upon me by these captives. They were like poor white farmers, ragged, dirty, and bent. The clothes they wore were shoddy gray and deeply repulsive to me. Their robes of buffalo, their leggins of buckskin, their beaded pouches—all the things I remembered with pride—had been worn out (or sold). Even the proud warriors of my tribe were reduced to the condition of those who are at once prisoners and beggars. My heart was like lead as I reached the agency.

It hurt me to do so, but I reported at once to the agent and asked leave to visit my father and mother.

"They are expecting you," he said. "You'll find them camped just beyond the graveyard."

I am glad that I saw my father and mother first in their tepee. My mother was cooking beneath a little shed of canvas. I called to her, and when she looked at me, without knowing me, something moved deep down in my heart. How brown and old and wrinkled she looked! Then I said, "Don't you know me, mother!"

Then her voice rose as she came hurrying to me, calling: "My son! My son has returned."

She took my hand, not daring to put her arms around me, for I looked, she said, exactly like the white man, but I pressed her hands, and then, while she sang a little song of joy, my father came out of his lodge and came slowly toward me.

I will not dwell on this meeting. I inquired at once concerning our chief. "He is still living in the same place near Rock Creek, and wishes to see you at once," said my father. "The white men are trying to get our land again and the chief wants to have a talk about it with you."

"Let us go down and see him to-night," I replied, and for this reason we broke camp and started away across the plains.

It was a strange thing to me to help my father harness a team to a wagon. He whom I had seen a hundred times riding foremost in the chase, whom I had watched at break of day leading a band of scouts up the steep side of a sculptured butte, or with gun in hand guarding The Sitting Bull as he slept, was now a teamster, and I, clothed in the white man's garments, was sad and ashamed. I could not but perceive that we were both more admirable as red warriors than as imitation Saxon farmers. That is my red blood, you see.

But my father was proud of me and of my power to converse with the agent. "My son," he said, "our hearts are big because you are back with us. Now this is your duty. You must listen to all that the commissioners say and tell us minutely so that we may not be deceived. We hear that a big council sent out the papers which Washington wishes us to put our mark on, but The Sitting Bull and most of our head men are agreed that we will never do so. Once before, three years ago, they tried to get us to sell, but when the white men grew angry and said, 'If you don't do this we will take your lands anyway!' The Sitting Bull rose and said, 'You are crazy,' and with a motion of his hand broke up the council and we all went away. Now the traitorous whites are coming again and we need you to listen and tell us what they say."

I knew of the council he spoke of—General Logan was the man who had threatened them—but I had not heard that the chief had dismissed the sitting. It showed me that The Sitting Bull was still chief. This I remarked.

"Yes," said my father, "he is head man of all the Sioux even yet, but the agent has set his hand against him. He gives favor to The Grass and The Gall and The Gray Eagle, who are all jealous and anxious to be set above The Sitting Bull. The agent has become bitter toward our chief because he will not do as he says, and because our father works always for the good of his people. He does nothing for himself alone, like many others."

As we came to the top of the hill and looked into the valley my father pointed at a small two-room log cabin and said, "There he lives, The Sitting Bull."

The chief was in a big tepee which stood near the house, and as we entered we found him entertaining Slohan and Katolan. He was seated in the center, cutting tobacco, while his guests ate from a dish of bread and meat. As I stood in the presence of these my honored leaders my heart swelled with longing for the good old time. Here was the dignity and the courtesy of the days of the buffalo. The chief was partly in white man's dress, but his hair was worn as of old and his gestures were those of a gentle host. His dignity, as well as the gravity of all the men, impressed me deeply.

He did not at first recognize me, but greeted my father, who, turning to me, said, "This is my son, returned from Washington."

Then the chief smiled, and cried out: "Ho, my son! I am glad to see you. I have heard you were coming. You look so like a white man my eyes were blinded. You must tell me all you have done and all you have heard."

I shook hands with each of the old men and took a seat near the chief, to whom I said: "Is all well with you? Does the agent treat you fairly?"

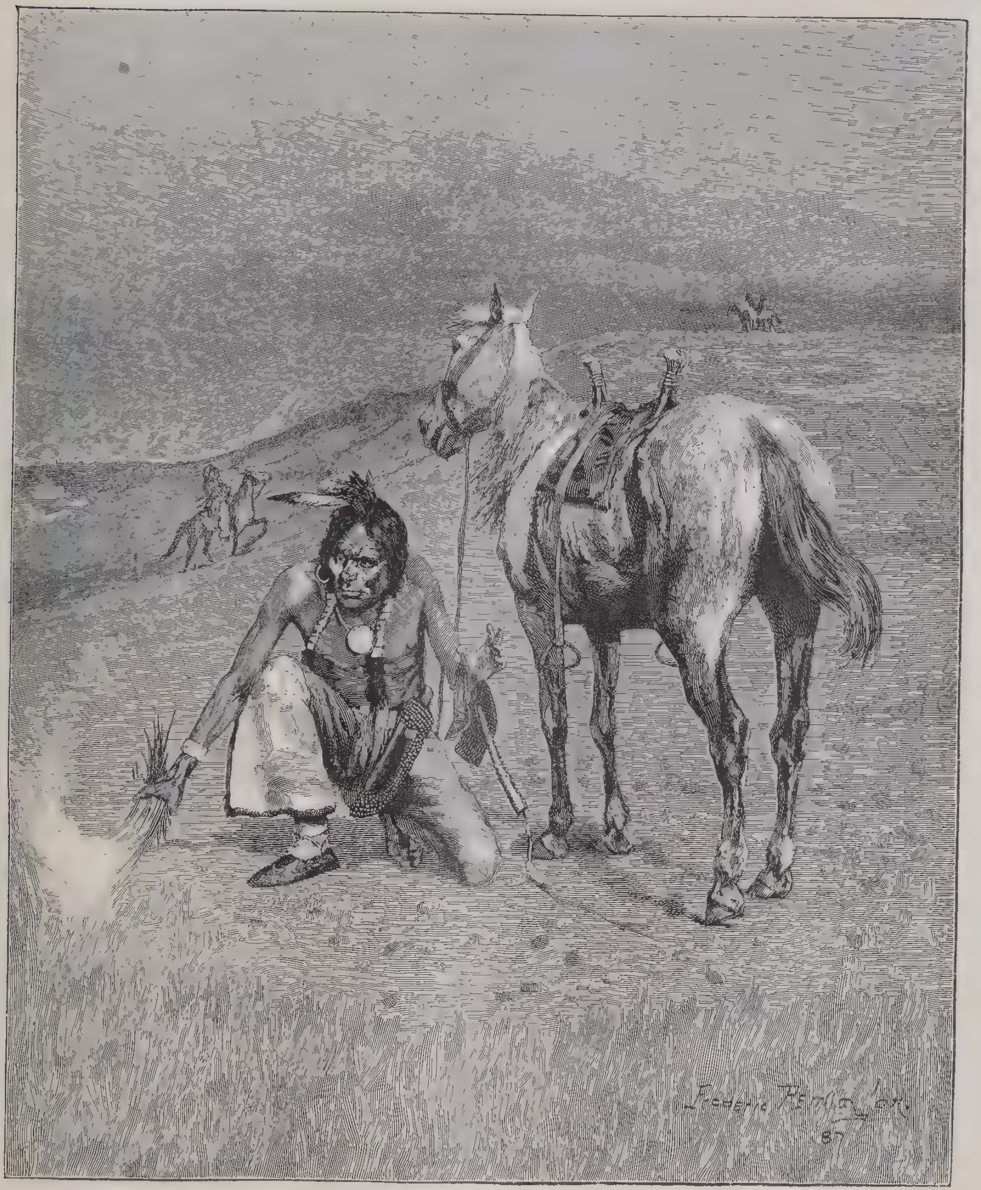
His face darkened, but he filled his pipe before he replied. "The agent is no longer my friend. He orders me about as if I were a dog. He refuses me permission to leave the reservation and checks me in every way. I think he means to break me, but he will never set his foot on my neck."

I was eager to understand the situation, and I listened carefully while the others talked of the many injustices under which they suffered. The chief urged me to write to Washington to have things changed.

I agreed to do so, but promised nothing more, for I well knew such letters might work harm to those I loved. I foresaw also that my position in my tribe was to be most difficult.

"We are ready to live the new life," declared the chief, "but we cannot farm the soil as the agent wishes. Go look at our fields. Each year they are burned white by the sun. The leaves of the corn are even now rolled together. The wheat is beginning to dry up. There is no hay and our rations are being cut down."

I could see that he had no heart in his farming. The life was too hard and too bitter. He was indeed like a chained eagle who sits and dreams of the wide landscape over which he once floated in freedom. He had thrown his influence in the right scale, but he was

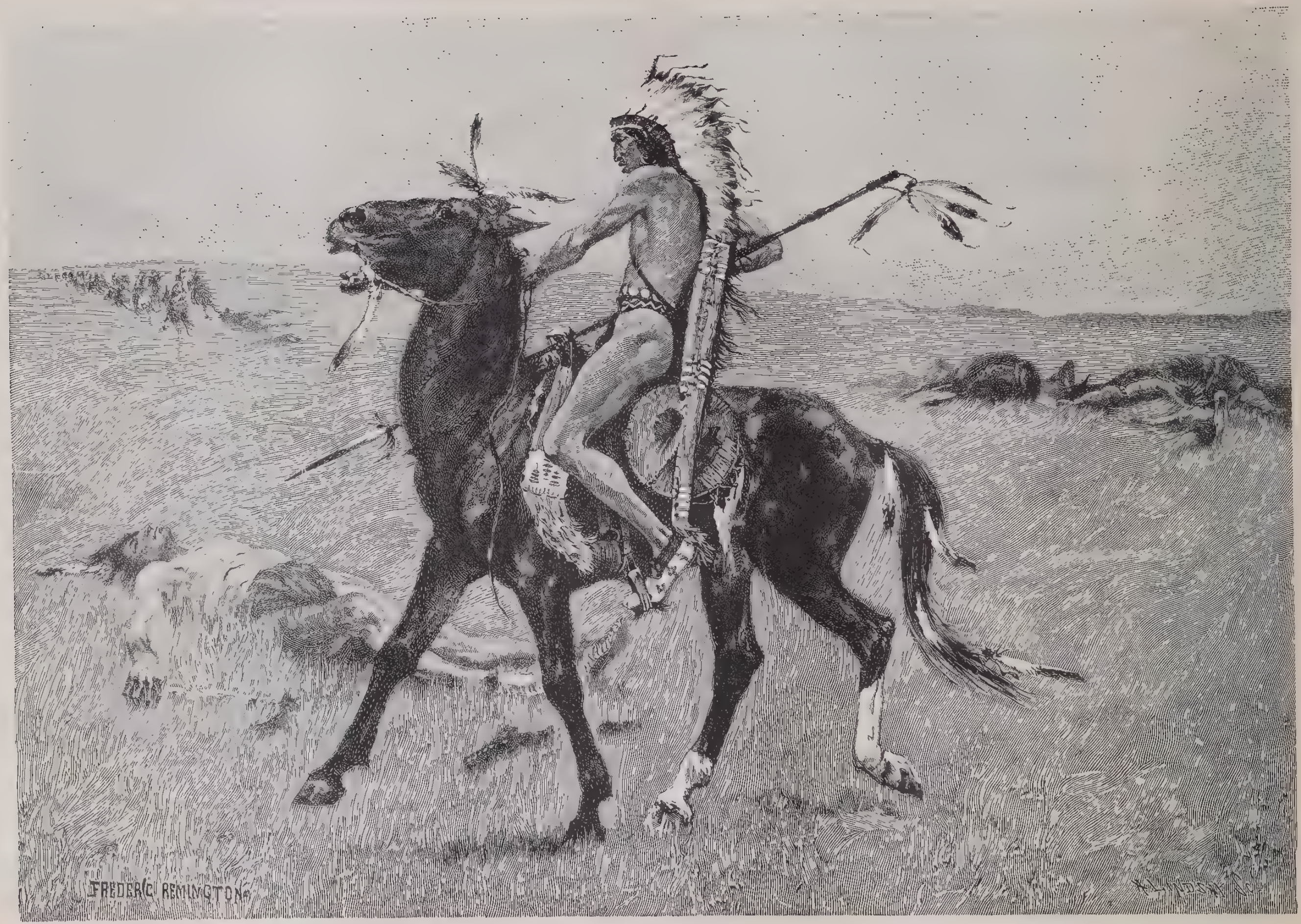


Burning the Range

Taught by experience that burning the grass insures its better growth, we are here shown Indians in the act of burning their range. In a day or two after the fire sweet, succulent grasses spring up again, and then the hard-worked Indian ponies revel for a short season on the tender herbage.

Illustration from
BURNING THE RANGE

Originally published in
HARPER'S WEEKLY, *September 17, 1887*



An Old-Time Northern Plains Indian

In order to claim a scalp, the warrior must give the dead man the coup. *In the illustration the Indian is in the act of doing this. In olden times the* coup *was a stab with a weapon, but in later times the Indians were provided with* coup *sticks. Whoever first strikes the victim with the* coup *can rightfully claim the scalp.*

Illustration from
SOME AMERICAN RIDERS
by Colonel Theodore Ayrault Dodge, U.S.A.

Originally published in
HARPER'S MAGAZINE, *May, 1891*

critical and outspoken upon all debatable questions, and this had come to anger the agent, who was eager to push all the people into what he called "self-supporting ways." This the chief did not oppose, though he could not live in the white man's country. "It makes me both weary and sorrowful," he said.

It did not take me more than a day to see that I was between two fires. My friends were all among those whom the agent called "The irreconcilables," and my chief was relying upon me to help them defeat the treaty for their lands, at the same time that the agent expected me to be a leader of the progressive party. It was not easy to serve two masters, and I was forced to be in a sense double tongued, which I did not like.

The agent was outspoken against my chief. "The old man is spoiled by newspaper notoriety," he said to me. "His power must be broken. He is a great and dangerous reactionary force and he and all the old-time chiefs must be stripped of their power and made of no account before the tribe can advance. He must be taught that I am the master here and that no redskin has any control."

To this I made no reply, for I could not agree with him. A man who is a chief by virtue of his native ability cannot be degraded and made of no account. The Sitting Bull was a chief by force of character. As of old he worked for the good of his people. If he saw a wrong he went forthwith to the agent and asked to have it righted. This angered the agent, for he considered the chief officious. He was jealous of his position as "little father." He was a good man, but he was opinionated and curt and irascible. He gave no credit to my chief. When the others made him spokesman of their council he would not listen to him. "He is a disturber," he said.

Now there are certain record books in the office in which copies of all letters are kept, and when I found this out I took time to read all that the agent had written of the chief. My position as issue clerk permitted me the run of the office, and so when no one was near I read. I wished to know what had taken place during the five years of my absence.

At first the agent wrote well of the chief. In reply to inquiries he said: "Sitting Bull is living here quietly and is getting ahead nicely. He is quiet and inoffensive, though proud of his fame as a chief." A year later he wrote of him, "His influence is nonprogressive, but believers in him are few, while many Indians are his enemies."

This I found to be true. Chief Gall and John Grass were both honored at his expense. The Grass was a man of intelligence and virtue who had early allied himself with the white man. He was a leader of those who saw the hopelessness of remaining in the ways of the fathers, and naturally the agent treated him with marked courtesy. In answer to a letter asking the names of the chief men of the tribe he named John Grass first, Mad Bear second, The Gall third—and ignored the chief entirely.

The Gall, already jealous of the great fame of The Sitting Bull, was easily won over to the side of the agent. He was a vigorous, loud-voiced man, brave and manly, but not politic. He had not entirely broken with his old chief, but he accepted position under the agent and listened to dispraise of The Sitting Bull from the agent's point of view.

With all his gentleness of manner, the old fire was in The Sitting Bull, for he said to me, when speaking of the attack of Shell Fish on him: "I am here, old and beaten—a prisoner subject to the word of a white master, but no man shall insult me. I will kill the man who strikes me. What is death to me? I will die as I have lived, a chief." For the most part he was so quiet and unassuming that he was overlooked. He never thrust himself forward; he dreamed in silence.

He had visited the white man's world several times, but these visions had not helped him; they had, indeed, thrown him into profound despair. "What can we do in strife with these wonder-working spirits?" he asked. "It is as foolish as trying to fly with the eagles. The white man owns all the productive land. What can we do farming on this hard soil? What are we beside these swarming settlers? We are as grasshoppers before a rushing herd of buffalo."

He did not care to look out of the car windows on these journeys. He and his warriors sat in silence or sang the songs of the chase and the victorious homecoming, trying to forget the world outside.

"Nothing astonished them and nothing interested them very much," said Louis to me in speaking of his trip to Washington. "The chief was at a great disadvantage, but he seldom made a mistake. He was Lakota and made no effort to be anything else."

The chief at last said, in answer to all similar requests, "I do not care to be on show."

He was very subjective. He had always been a man of meditation and prayer, and had scrupulously observed the ceremonials of his tribe. Now when he saw no hope of regaining his old freedom he turned his eyes inward and pondered. He was both philosopher and child. Nature was mysterious, not in the ultimate as with the educated man, but close beside him as with a boy. The moon, the clouds, the wind in the grass, all these were to him things inexplicable, as, indeed, they are to the greatest white men; only to my chief they came nearer some way.

Often during these days I saw him sitting at sunset on his favorite outlook—a hill above his cabin—a minute speck against the sky, deeply meditating upon the will of the Great Spirit, and my heart was filled with pain. I, too, mourned the world that was passing so swiftly and surely.

VII

HE OPPOSED ALL TREATIES

During my absence the white settlers had swept across the ancient home of the Dakotas and were already clamoring for the land on which Sitting Bull dwelt, and he was deeply disturbed. He knew how rapacious these plowmen were and he was afraid of them. To his mind our home was pitifully small as it stood, and he urged me to look into this threatened invasion at once.

I did so, and reported to him that a commission was already on its way to see us and that they would soon issue a call for us.

Throwing off his lethargy, he became once more "the treaty chief." Calling a council of all the head men he said to them:

"It will be necessary to choose speakers to represent us at this meeting. It is not wise that I should be one of these. Let us council upon what we are to do, name our speakers, and be ready for the commission when it comes."

So they chose John Grass, Mad Bear, Chief Gall, and Big Head to speak, and went a few days later to meet the commissioners.

My people asked for their own interpreter, Louis Primeau, whom they trusted, and the council began with everybody in good humor. The commissioners rose one after the other and made talk and gave out many copies of the treaty. Then the council adjourned.

That night the head men all met at the lodge of the chief. I read the treaty to him, and so did Louïe. Again The Sitting Bull said: "The pay is too small, and, besides, they have changed our boundaries. Do not sign." And so when we assembled the next day our speakers declined to sign and the commissioners were much disappointed. They argued long and loud, to no effect.

It was explained to us again that the Government proposed to set aside five great reservations, one for the Ogallallahs, one for the Brulés, one for the Crow Creek people, one for the Cheyenne River people, and that the lines were fixed for the great Sioux nation at the Standing Rock. The north boundary was the Cannonball River; on the south, the Moreau; but to the west it extended only eighty miles.

Speaking to his head men, our chief said: "Who made that line on the west? Was it a white man or an Indian? They say the lines of the old treaties, whether fixed by the red man or the white man, must stand. But I do not grant that treaty. It was stolen from us. We have paid for all they have done for us, and more. They have never fulfilled a treaty. See the pitiful small land that is left us. Do not sign. If you sign we are lost."

The commissioners, hitherto displeased, now became furious. They accused The Sitting Bull of intimidating the people. They raged and expostulated. They wheedled and threatened, but the chief shook his head and said: "Do not sign. This man is talking for the white man's papers, and not for us. He uses many words, but he does not deceive me. Do not listen to him." And they laughed at the false speaker.

At last Gall, who sat beside the chief, spoke. "We are through We are entirely finished."

Then The Sitting Bull rose and said: "We have spoken pleasantly and have reached this point in good humor. Now we are going home," and made a sign and the council broke up in confusion.

The treaty was not signed and The Sitting Bull was made to bear the blame of its defeat. As for me, I exulted in his firmness, his self-control, and his simple dignity. He was still the chief man of treaties.

But the white people did not give up. They never recede. The defeat of the Democrats made a different Congress and a new attempt was at once made to get a treaty. Profiting by the mistakes of the other commissions, they did not come to the Standing Rock first (they feared the opposition of The Sitting Bull); they went to the lower reservations and secured all the Santees, all the "breeds," and members of other tribes, men whom my people did not recognize as belonging to us. The news of this made my chief very angry. "The white men have no sense of justice when they deal with us," he said, bitterly. "They are mad for our lands. They will do anything to steal them away."

When the commissioners appeared at the Standing Rock they were triumphant through General Crook. Rations were short and the people were hungry and General Crook took advantage of this. He was lavish of beef issues during the treaty. On the third day he said, gruffly: "You'd better take what we offer. Congress will open the reservation, anyhow.

Each night, as before, The Sitting Bull stood opposed to the treaty. "It is all we have," he said, despairingly. "Once we had a mighty tract; now it is little. You have bought peace from the whites by selling your lands; now when you have no more to sell what will you do? I have never entertained a treaty from the whites. I am opposed to this. I will not sign. Our lands are few and they are bad lands. The white men have shut us up in a desert where nothing lives, yet it is our last home. Will your break down the walls and let the white man sweep us away? You say we will have a great deal of money in return. How has it been in the past? How has the government fulfilled its obligations? Congress cuts down our rations at will; what they owe us does not matter. You have seen how difficult it is to raise food here. We need every blanket's breadth of our land if we are to live. I am getting to be an old man; a few years and I will be with my fathers; but before I go I want to see my children provided for. Let the government pay us what they owe us in cattle and we will then be able to live. I will not sign."

That night John Grass gave way. The commission convinced him that this treaty was the best that could be secured. A new council was hastily called in order to get The Grass to sign, and my chief was not informed of it till the hearing was nearly over.

As he came into the room he was both angry and despairing, and demanded a chance to speak. "I have kept in the background so far," he said. "Now I wish to be heard ——"

But they were afraid of him and refused to hear him. "We want no more speaking. John Grass come forward and sign!"

Grass went forward. The Sitting Bull cried out in a piercing voice: "*Do not sign!* Let everybody follow me."

At his command all his old guard rose and went away, but John Grass took the pen and signed. He was the man of the hour; he represented a compromise policy. He was willing to be the white man's tool. And I, sitting there as interpreter, powerless to aid my chief in his heroic fight for the remnant of the empire that was ours, could only bow my head in acknowledgment of the widsom of the majority—for I knew the insatiable white man better than John Grass. To have rejected the treaty would have but delayed the end.

My chief went to his lodge, still the Uncapappa, still unsubdued, representing all that was distinctive and admirable in the old life of the chase; but he knew now that the white man possessed the earth.

"This is now the end," he said, sorrowfully, to my father. "Nothing remains to us but a home in the Land of the Spirits."

VIII

THE RETURN OF THE SPIRITS

The year that followed the signing of this treaty was a dark one for the Sitting Bull. Even those who had been most clearly acquiescent in the white man's way grew sad.

You must remember that my people, the Uncapappas, are the westernmost branch of the great Sioux nation and had known but little of the white man up to the time of their surrender in 1880. We knew nothing of tilling the soil. We were essentially buffalo hunters and had been for many generations. The Yanktonaise, the Menneconjous, had far greater knowledge of the white man's ways. In the days when they occupied the whole of the upper Mississippi Valley we still kept our western position, always among the buffalo and the elk. Our tepees were still made of skins.

Can you not see that these horsemen of the plains—these wandering, fearless, proud hunters—even under the best conditions would have found it very hard to give up the roving life of the chase and settle down to the planting of corn and squashes?

It is easy to clip the wings of eagles, but it is not of much avail to beat them and give command that they instantly become geese. Under every fostering condition it would have been difficult for Slohan and Gall and Sitting Bull to become farm laborers.

I call upon you to be just to my great chief, for he honestly tried to take on this new life. I assert that no man of his spirit and training could have done more. He tried hard to be as good as his word; for witness I call the agent himself who in those early days said of him: "The Sitting Bull is living here peaceably and doing well." Even up to the month of November in 1888, the year of the first commission, he praised him. It was afterward that the agent changed his mind and began to abuse him. I will tell presently why this was so.

You see the white people allowed us no time to change. We had been many centuries forming habits which they insisted should be broken instantly. They cut us off from our game. They ordered us to farm, and this without knowing the character of our reservation. The soil of this country is very hard and dry and the climate is severe. It is high, upland prairie cut by a few thin, slow streams which lie in deep gullies. The upland grows a short, dry grass, and there are many years when it is dry as hay in early June. It is good for pasture, but it makes very little hay for winter. It is a drought country; for the most part the crops burn up under the fierce sun and the still more savage wind. In winter it is a terrible place to live unless one is sheltered by the cottonwood and willow groves on the river. It was given us originally because they thought it useless to the plowmen.

On this stern land the white man set my people and said, in a terrible voice, "Farm or die!" We tried, but year by year the trial ended in failure. Wrong implements were given us, great plows which our ponies could not draw, and bad seeds, and this outlay exhausted our annuity and cut us off from cattle issues. Our friends among the white people early began to see the folly of trying to force us to till this iron soil, and urged the issue of cattle, but the giving of useless things was thereupon taken as an excuse for not issuing stock, and when at last they were sent—a few cows and sheep—too few to be of any use, they were used as warrant to cut down our rations, which (as the chief constantly asserted) were not a gratuity, but a just payment.

They had never been enough even when they were honestly and fully issued, and when the quality was bad or the issue cut down many of them were actually hungry for three days in the week. You may read in one of the great books of the government these words: "Suddenly and almost without warning they were called upon to give up all their ancient pursuits and without previous training settle down to agriculture in a land largely unfitted for such uses. The freedom of the chase was exchanged for the idleness of the camp. The boundless range abandoned for the circumscribed reservation, and abundance of plenty supplanted by limited and decreasing subsistence and supplies. Under these circumstances it is not in human nature not to be discontented and restless, even turbulent and violent." So said the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

In spite of all these things I assert my people were patient. The Sitting Bull was careful to do nothing which would harm his people, and often he walked away in silence from the agent's harsh accusation.

Hunger is hard to bear, but there were many other things to make life very barren and difficult. Around us to north and east and west the settlers were swarming. Our reservation seemed such a little thing in comparison with our old range—like a little island in great water. Every visit our head men made to the east or the west taught them the gospel of despair. The flood of white men which had been checked by the west bank of the Missouri now flowed by in great streams to the west and curled round to the north. Everywhere unfriendly ranchers set up their huts. They all wore guns, while we were forbidden to do the like. They hated us as we hated them, but they had all the law on their side.

Thus physically we were being submerged by the rising tide of an alien race. In the same way our old customs and habits were sinking beneath the white man's civilization. One by one our songs were dying. One by one our dances were being cut off by the government, and our prayers and ceremonies, sweet and sacred to us, were already discountenanced or positively forbidden. Our beautiful moccasins were tabooed, our buckskin beaded shirts replaced by ragged coats. Our women were foolish in the dress of cheap white women. We became a tribe of ragamuffins like the poor men whom the newspapers make jokes about and call "hoboes."

Let me tell you farther. You cannot understand my people if you consider the white man's religion and the white man's way of life the only ones sanctioned by the Great Spirit.

My friends in Washington, the men with whom I studied, gave me this thought. There is good in all religions and all races and I am trying to write of the wrongs of my people from that point of view. The Sitting Bull loved the old life, but he often said: "We were living the life the Great Spirit outlined for us. We knew no other. If you can show us that your manner of life is better, that it will make us happier, then we will come to your way," and for a time he thought that perhaps the white man's way of life was nearer to the Great Spirit's will; but when he was cold and hungry he felt the injustice of this superior race, and doubted.

We all saw that as the years went on and the old joys slipped away no new ones came to take their places, while want, a familiar foe, remained close to every fireside. Our best thinkers perceived that fine large houses and nice warm clothing were unattainable to vast numbers of the white men, "how then can the simple red man hope to win them?" They began to say: "We have given our freedom, our world, our traditions, for a dark cabin, hard, cruel boots, the settler's contempt, and the soldier's diseases." "Our race is passing away. The new conditions destroy us. If we cannot persist as Sioux, why persist at all? There are enough white beggars in the world, why add ourselves to the army of the poor?"

It was for this reason that the chief opposed the treaty subdividing the reservation. "Our strength is in being a people. As individuals the white man will spit on us." When the treaty was about to be executed a white man said to him: "What do you Indians think of it?"

He drew himself up and the old-time fire flamed in his eyes as he said: "Indians! There are no Indians left but me." But later he said, sadly: "It is impossible for me to change. I cannot sign, but my children may sign if they wish."

Just at this time our cattle began to die of a strange disease and our children were seized by a mysterious malady which the white people call grippe, but for which we had no name. We were without medicine to counteract these fevers, and the agency doctor could not do much for us. Our children died in hundreds. This was terrible. It seemed that all were to be swept away.

Bishop Hare and General Miles both saw and reported upon these conditions, and I wrote to all my friends in agony of haste, but the government was slow to act in our need, though it was ever in haste to cut up our land and give it away. No one cared what became of us. We had no votes, we could not help any man to office. All promises were neglected, and to add to our misery it was said the new administration would still further reduce our payments and the rations which were our due. When this news came to us it seemed as if the very earth on which we stood was sinking beneath our feet. The old world of the buffalo, the free life of the past, became each day more beautiful as the world about us, the prison in which we lived, grew black with the clouds of despair.

In this moment of hopeless misery—this intolerable winter of tragic dejection—there came to my people the rumor of something very wonderful. A messenger to my chief said that far in the west, at the base of a vast white mountain, a wondrous medicine man had descended from a cloud to meet and save the red men. Just as Christ came long ago to the Jews, so now the Great Spirit had sent a messenger to the red people to bring back the old world of the buffalo and to repeople its shining vistas with those who had died. So they said, "By faith and purity we are to again prevail over that earth."

It was a seed planted at the right time in the right soil. In the night of his despair my chief listened to the message as to a sweet story, not believing it, yet eager to hear more.

The herald of the new faith was a Brulé, who ended by saying: "The Kicking Bear, one of our chiefs, is gone to search into the beginning of this story. He it was who sent me to you. He wished me to acquaint you with what he had heard."

"When he returns," replied the chief, "tell him I wish to talk with him of this strange thing."

A report of this man's message spread among the people and many believed it. We began to hear obscurely about a new dance which some of the people at Rosebud and Pine Ridge had adopted—a ceremony to test the faith of those who believed—a medicine dance to bring back the past—and the people brooded upon the words of the Brulé, who said that the world of the buffalo was to be restored to them and all the old customs and joys brought back.

It was a magical thought. Their deep longing made it expand in their minds like a wonderful flower, and they waited impatiently the coming of the herald.

You must not forget that every little word my people knew of the Christian religion prepared them for this miraculous change. The white man's religion was full of miracles like this. Did not Christ raise men from the dead? Was he not born of a Virgin and did he not change water into wine? The wise men of the Bible, we were told, were able to make the sun stand still, and once the walls of a great city crumbled before the magic blast of rams' horns.

Many times we had heard the preachers, the wise men of the white men, say: "By faith are mountains removed," therefore our minds were prepared to believe in the restoration of the world of the buffalo. Was it not as easy for the Great Spirit as to make the water cover the highest mountains? My friend the Blackbird used to say "Every race despises the superstitions of others, but clings to its own." I am Sioux, I could not help being thrilled by this story.

My brain responded to every story the old man told. I saw again the splendid reaches of the plain. I rode in the chase of the buffalo. I heard the songs of rejoicing as the women hung the red meat up to dry. I played again among the lodges. Yes, it was all very sweet to dream about, but I said to the chief: "I have been among the white people; I have studied their books. The world never turns backward. We must go on like the rivers, on into the mystery."

"We will see," he answered. "I have often reproved you for saying, 'Yes, yes,' to all that the white man says. This may be all a lie. The Kicking Bear has gone forth into the west to meet this wonder worker. When he returns we will council upon his report. Till then we will do nothing."

But no power could prevent the spread of the story and its dream among my people. They were quick to seize and build upon this slender promise. Can you not understand our condition of mind? Imagine that a great and powerful race had appeared from over the sea and had driven your people from their ancestral lands, on and on, until at last only a handful of you remained. Imagine this handful corralled in a small, bleak valley cut off from all natural activities, its religions tabooed, its dances and ceremonies forbidden, hungry, cold, despairing. Could you then be logical and reasonable and completely sane?

If my race had been a servile race, ready to play the baboon, quick to imitate, then it would not have vanished, as it has, in war and famine. We are freemen. We had always been unhampered by any alien laws. We moved as we willed, led by the buffalo, directed by the winds, cowering only before the snows. Therefore, we resented the white man's restrictions. We had the hearts of eagles in our cages, and yet, having the eyes of eagles and the brains of men, we came at last to see the utter futility of struggle. We lost all faith in physical warfare and sat down to die. As a race we were resigned to death, and in this night of our resignation the star of prophecy rose. We turned toward the mystic powers for aid.

IX

THE MESSAGE OF KICKING BEAR

One October day in 1890 a party of Brulé Sioux from the Cheyenne River agency came riding down into the valley of the Grand River, inquiring for The Sitting Bull. As they were passing my father's lodge he came out and stopped them.

"What do you want of The Sitting Bull?" he asked, with the authority of one of the old-time "Silent Eaters."

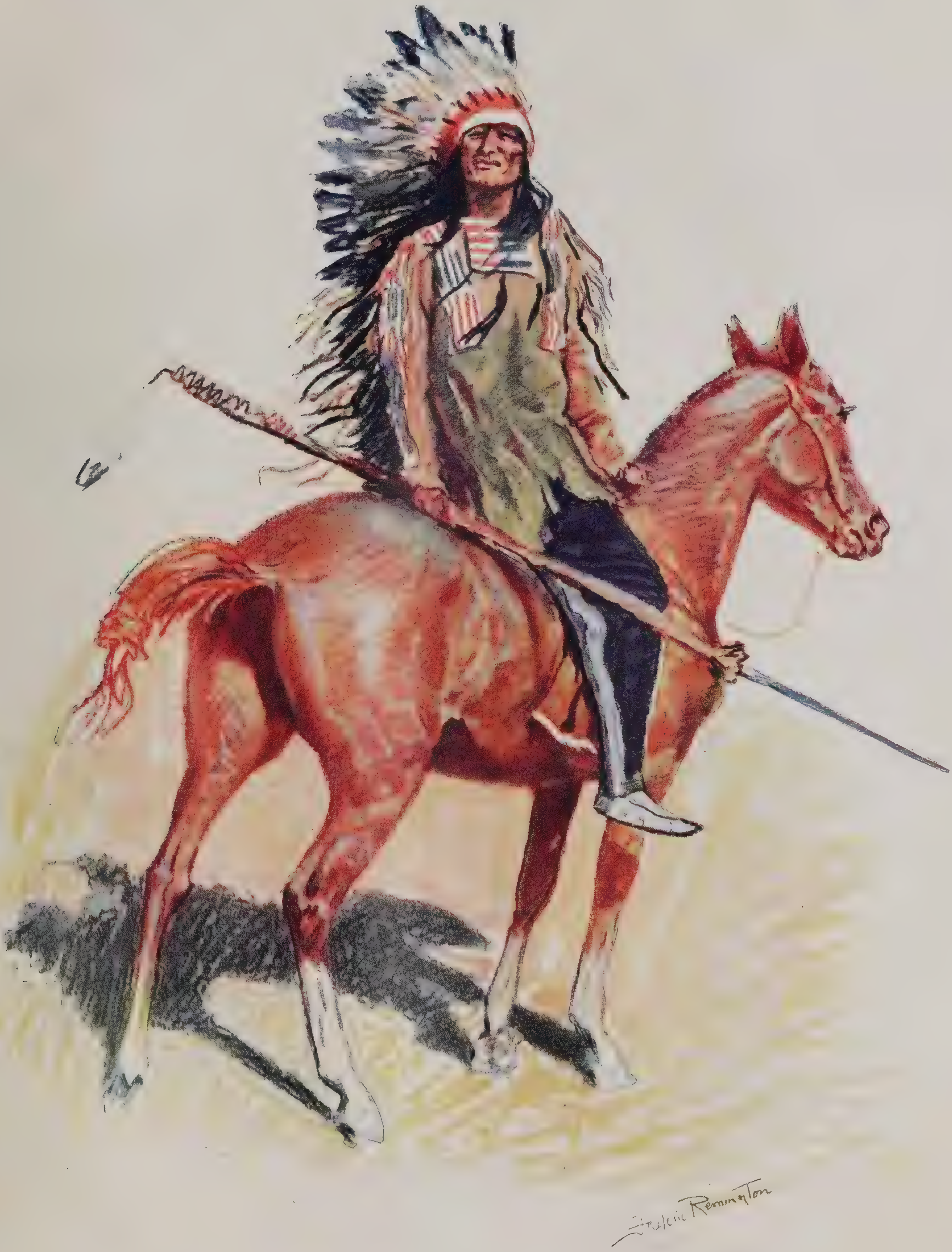
"We bring a message to him," replied the headman. "I am Kicking Bear. Take us to him without delay."

The chief at this time lived with his younger wife in a two-room log house (a cabin for his first wife stood near) and as the strangers came to the door they were accosted by an old woman who was at work about the fire under an open lodge. In answer to my father's inquiry for the chief she pointed toward a large tepee standing behind the house, and, turning aside, my father lifted the doorflap and entered. The chief was alone, smoking his pipe in grave meditation.

"Father," said my sire, "here are some men from the Cheyenne River to see you."

"I am Kicking Bear," said the visitor, "for whom you sent."

The chief greeted his visitors with gentle courtesy and motioned them to their seats. "My friends, I am glad to see you. You are hungry. Rest and eat. When you are filled and refreshed we will talk." Then calling to his wife to put food before the guests, he


Frederic Remington

An Indian Chief

Illustration from
A BUNCH OF BUCKSKINS
by Frederic Remington

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smoked quietly while they ate. When they were satisfied and all were composed and comfortable he said to Kicking Bear: "Now, my friend, my ears are open."

The visitor's voice was full of excitement, but well under control at first. He said:

"My friend, we all know you; your fame is wide. You are the head of all our people. We know it. You have always been true to the ways of the fathers. You fought long and well against the coming of the whites. Therefore I come to you. This is the story: The first people to know of the Messiah on earth were the Shoshones and the Arapahoes. A year ago Good Thunder, the Ogallallah, hearing of this wonderful story, took four of his friends and went to visit the place where the wonder-working Son of the Great Spirit was said to be. He was gone many days, but at last he sent word that he had found the Messiah, that he was among those who eat fish, far toward the high white mountains, and he asked that I come and bear witness. Thereupon I also went—with much fear. After many days I found the place. It was deep in a strange country—a desert country. Many people were camped there. All tongues were spoken, yet all were at peace. It was said that sixteen different tribes were present, and that they had all come, as I had done, to know the truth. No one thought of war. All strife was put away."

The Sitting Bull listened with half-closed eyes, weighing every word. It was plain, my father told me, that Kicking Bear was struggling to control his emotion. One by one the chief's family gathered around the tepee to listen. It was a momentous hour.

"They put up robes in a circle to make a dancing place," resumed the messenger, "and we all gathered there about sundown. It was said that the Messiah was ready to appear and teach us a new religion. Just after dark some one said, 'There is the Great Father.' I looked and saw him sitting on one side of the circle. I did not see him come. I do not know how he got there. The light of the fire fell on him and I saw him plainly. He was not so dark as a red man, but he was not a white man. He was a good-looking person with a kind, wise face. He was dressed in white and had no beard or mustache. One by one all the chiefs drew near to greet him. I went with the others, but when I came near I bowed my head; his eyes were so keen they blinded me. Then he rose and began to sing, and those who had been there before, began to dance in the new ceremony.

"When we stopped dancing for a little while he spoke, saying, 'My children, I am glad to have you here. I have a great deal to say to you. I am the Son of the Great Spirit, sent to save you from destruction.' We were very still as he spoke; no one whispered; all listened. He spoke all languages, so that we could understand. 'I am the Creator of this earth and everything you see about you. I am able to go to the world of the dead, and I have seen all those you have lost. I will teach you to visit the ghost world also; that is the meaning of the dance. Once long ago I came to the white people, but they misused me. They put nails in my feet. See the scars!' And he held up his hands and we saw the scars."

The Sitting Bull gave a startled exclamation: "Hoh! You saw the scars!"

"I saw them plainly," the Kicking Bear solemnly replied, as words of wonder ran round the tepee, "and all my friends saw them as plainly as I. Then the Messiah said: 'I found my white children bad and I returned to the Great Spirit, my Father. I told them that after many hundreds of years I would return. Now am I returned, but this time I come to the red people.

"'I come to teach you a new religion and to make you happy. I am to renew the earth, which is old and worn out. If you follow my teaching, if you do as I bid you, I will bring to pass marvelous things. This is the message of my Father the Creator. He has been displeased with his children. He has turned his face away from the red people for many years. If you had remained true to the ways of the fathers these misfortunes would not have come upon you. You would not now be shut up by the white man, you would be free and happy as of old. But the heart of the Great Spirit is again soft toward you and he bids me say, "If you will live according to the ways of the Saviour whom I have sent among you I will again smile upon you. I will cause the white man to disappear from the earth, together with all the marks he has made with the plow and the ax. I will cause the old world to come back. It will slide above the present earth as one hand slides above the other; the white man and all his works will be buried and the red man will be caught up in the air and put down on this old earth as it returns, and he will find the buffalo and the elk, the deer and the antelope, feeding as of ancient days on the rich grass. The rifle will be no longer necessary nor the white man's food or clothing. All will be as it was in the days of our fathers. No one will grow old, no one will be sick, no one will die. All will be glad and happy once more.''''

As he talked The Kicking Bear grew greatly excited. He rose and his voice rang loud and clear. The women began to moan, but the Chief sat still, very still; his time to speak had not yet come.

The Kicking Bear went on. "He commanded that we put all evil thoughts aside. We must not fight or take from one another any good thing. We must be friends with everyone—with the white man, too. Our hearts must be clean and good.

"He also taught us the dance and new methods of purification, and these he commanded me to carry to you." In this way The Kicking Bear ended, addressing the chief: "This is the message, father, and this is the promise: *If all the red people unite, casting away all that is of the white man, praying and purifying themselves, then will the old world come back—the old happy world of the buffalo, and all the dead ones of our race will return, a mighty host, driving the buffalo before them.*"

The chief sat in silence for a long time, and when he spoke his voice was very quiet, with a sad cadence. "This would please me well. But how do I know that it is not a lie? What proof is there that all these good things will come to pass? The invader is strong. I have given up war because I know it is foolish to fight against him. I have seen his land to the east. I know that he has devoured forests and made corn to grow where deep waters once rolled. He is more numerous than the buffalo ever were. All the red men of all the plains and hills cannot defeat him. It is hopeless to talk of driving him back."

"That is true," replied The Kicking Bear, "but you have heard how the white man's Bible speaks of these things. In the olden time, they say, when the people despaired of weapons and war they began to pray to their Great Spirit, and he sent unseen powers to help them. They tell of cities that fell at sound of a trumpet. We are to fight no more with weapons. It is of no avail to use the ax. We must please the Great Spirit; we must beseech him to turn his face upon us again and our enemies will melt away."

"But what proof is there of this? It is all a tale. It is as the sound of a pleasant breeze in the trees."

"The proof is in this," earnestly replied The Kicking Bear. "In this dance, men are able to leave the body and fly far away and look upon the spirits of the dead, and to ride the old-time plains in pursuit of the buffalo. I have myself seen this old world waiting to be restored. Let us call a council. Let us dance and some of your own people—perhaps The Sitting Bull himself—will be able to leave the body and visit the wonderful world of the spirit and return to tell the people of it! Let us dance; the proof will come."

To this the chief made cautious reply: "We will not be hasty. Remain with us and we will talk further of these things."

To Slohan he said: "This man talks well. He claims to have been in the west and to have seen the Messiah; yet we must be careful. We will look minutely into the matter. We must not seem foolish." Then he turned again to the Brulé. "When is this good change to come to us?"

"The Father said that if all his words are obeyed he will cause the new earth to come with the springing grass."

"Do you believe this story?" asked the chief, pointedly.

"Yes."

"What causes your belief?"

The Kicking Bear became deeply moved; his voice trembled as he replied: "Because since I touched his hand I have been out of the body many times. I too have visited the spirit world, and I too have seen the dead, and I have seen the buffalo and the shining new world, more beautiful than the old. Since my return I often see the Saviour in my sleep. I know that through him you and all your tribe can fly to the spirit world and see your friends. Therefore have I come that I may teach you the songs and the dances which bring the trance and the vision."

"You speak of the destruction of the white people. How is that to be brought about?" asked the chief.

"All by great magic. War is useless. All who believe must wear an eagle plume, and when the new earth comes sliding over the old, those who wear the sacred feather will be caught up and saved, while the white man and all those who reject the Father's message will be swept down and buried deep." Then the messenger cried out with passion: "*Father, they are all dancing—the Piutes, the Shoshones, the Ogallallahs, the Cheyennes—all the people. Hear me! I bring a true message! Listen, I implore!*"

He began to sing, and his companions joined him. The song they sang was strange to my father, and very, very sad—as dolorous as the wind in the bare branches of the elm tree. It was not a war song; it was a mourning cry that made all hearts melt. As they sang, Kicking Bear began to tremble, and then his right arm began to whirl about wildly as if it were a club. Then he fell stiffly to the ground like a man in a fit.

The Sitting Bull rose up quickly. "Hah! What is the meaning of this?" he asked, looking about him warily.

"He has gone into a trance," said one of the others. "He is even now in the spirit world. Do not touch him."

For a long time the messenger lay as if dead and no one dared disturb him. My chief sat smoking, patiently waiting for Kicking Bear to speak. At last he came to life again and sat up. "I have seen the Father," he said, with shining face, "and he has given me a sign. He has made my left hand stronger than the strongest man. Come and see!" He held out his hand and my father took it, but it scared him and he flung it away from him. It made his muscles contract and his flesh sting as if needles had been thrust into it. Then The Bear cried out: "See! I am telling the truth. I have seen the Messiah. He has given me an arm of power for a sign. He told me to return and teach The Sitting Bull the new religion." He laid hold of a heavy white cup. "See the sign?" he cried, and ground the cup to pieces on his hand.

The Sitting Bull was deeply troubled. "We will talk of this to-morrow," and he went away profoundly stirred by what he had seen.

The next morning he called a council of his close friends, and at last sent for Kicking Bear, and said: "Your story is sweet in our ears. It may be true. I do not think so, but we will try. We have come to the time when all weapons are useless. We are despairing and weak. Guns are of no avail. The Great Spirit has certainly turned his face away. It may be that prayer and song will cause him to smile upon us again. *You may teach us the dance.*"

X

THE DANCE BEGINS

So it was that in the prepared soil of my people's minds this seed of mystery fell. It was not a new religion; it was indeed very old. Many other races had believed it; the time was come for the Sioux to take it to themselves. In their despair they greedily seized upon it. In their enforced idleness they welcomed it.

Swiftly the news flew, wildly exaggerated, of course. It was said that the Messiah had sent a message direct to the chief, and that a sign had been given to the courier which had convinced my father and many others—though The Sitting Bull yet doubted.

Uncapappas are like any other folk. There are excitable ones and doubting ones, those who believe easily and those who are disposed to prove all things. Many old women with sons and daughters lately passed to the spirit land laid hold upon this news with instant belief. Winter was coming again; food was scarce; the children were ailing; life was joyless and held no promise of happier things. So, as among the white people, the bereaved were quick to embrace any faith which promised reunion.

At last men of keener intelligence, like my father, considered it, saying: "It may be true. The white man had a Saviour. Why should not the Great Spirit send one to us? We can at least examine into this man's story. We can go and see the dance."

Others, who had outgrown the faith of their fathers, and who had also rejected the Christian religion, smiled and said, "It is foolish!" Nevertheless, curious to see what was done, they loitered near to look on and laugh.

Last of all were those who brooded bitterly upon the past—the chained lions who had never accepted the white man's dominion, who feared nothing but captivity, and who sat ever in their tepees with their blankets around them smoking, ruminating, reliving the brave, ancient days. "We are prisoners," they said. "We are not allowed to leave the narrow bounds of our bleak reservation. We can neither hunt nor visit our friends. What is the use of living? Why not die in battle? Is it not better to be slain and pass at once to the spirit land than to die of starvation and cold? We know the fate of the dead cannot be worse than our lot here."

In the light of memory the country of their youth was a land of waving grass, resplendent skies, rippling streams, shining tepees, laughter, song, and heroic deeds. In dreams they were once more young scouts, selected for special duty. In dreams they rode again over the boundless swelling plain, hunting the great black cattle of the wild. They lay in wait for the beaver beside streams without a name. They sat deep in pits, hearing the roaring rush of the swooping eagle, and always when they woke to reality they found themselves ragged beggars under the control of a white man, betrayed and forgotten by their recreant allies.

What had they retained of all this mighty heritage? A minute patch of barren ground and the blessed privilege of working like a Chinaman or a negro. Of all the old-time adventurous, plentiful, and peaceful life the white settlers had bereft them. Mile by mile the invaders had eaten up the sod. The buffalo, the elk, the beaver had disappeared before their guns. Stream after stream they had bridged and in the valleys they had set their fences. The agent always talked as though every red man who wished could have a large house and fruit trees and pleasant things, but it was quite certain now that nothing remained for these proud hunters of the bison but a practical slavery to the settler; to clean the dung from the white man's stables was their fate.

With this view the "Silent Eaters" had most sympathy. In the days immediately following their return from the north they had caught some of the enthusiasm of their teachers. They, too, had hoped for some of the good things of the white man's civilization.

The Sitting Bull himself had been hopeful. He had spoken bravely to them advising them to set their feet in the white man's road; but as the years passed one by one he had felt with ever-increasing bitterness the checks and constraints of his warden. He had seen sycophants and hypocrites exalted and his own wishes thwarted or treated with contempt and his face had grown ever sadder and sterner. When he looked into the future he saw the almost certain misery and final extinction of his race, so inevitably he, too, had turned his eyes inward to dream of the past. Having no hope of earthly things, he was now, in spite of himself, allured by the stories of this Saviour in the West. Certainly he could not forbid his people this comfort.

He had, too, the natural pride of the leader. He considered himself as he was, the head man of his tribe, and it hurt him to find himself completely shorn of command. The agent now deliberately humiliated him, ignoring his suggestions and misrepresenting him among the white men. "These old chiefs must give way," he said. "If we are to civilize these Indians, all of the old tribal government must be torn up." And in this he had the support of many friends of my race.

One of the most serious differences existing at this time lay in The Sitting Bull's refusal to recognize the authority of the agent's native police. "I am still the head of my tribe," he proudly said. "I do not need your help in order to keep the peace."

Then the agent very shrewdly appointed those who were jealous of the chief to be the heads of his police force, and so made sure of them in case of trouble. The chief was made to look and feel like a man living by sufferance, while renegades whom he despised and recreants whom he hated were put in power over him. Yet he was bearing all this quietly; he had even submitted to personal abuse, rather than prove a disturber.

This message from the Messiah came, therefore, just at a time when the chief and his "Silent Eaters" were suffering their final degradation at the hands of the agent. It was hard to die at this time like outcast dogs, with no hope for their people. They could not understand why they should be made the target of the agent's malice. They had the pride of leadership. It was honorable to be a chief. The qualities which went to make a chieftain were not mean; they were noble. Why should other and lower men be placed in contemptuous authority over them?

And so these proud spirits shut their eyes to the future and longed, as no white man can ever know, for the glorious days of the buffalo.

For three days The Kicking Bear instructed the few who believed, preparing them for the dance. "You must cast aside everything that the white man has brought to you," he said. "The Messiah commands that all metals be thrown away. Lay down all weapons, for this is a dance of peace. It is needful that you dress as in the olden time before the invader came. Let each one who dances and accepts the word of the Father wear a white eagle plume, for this will be a sign when the new earth comes. You will be caught up into the clouds by reason of your faith, while all others will perish. You must purify yourselves, also, by use of the sweat lodge, and after the dance you must bathe in clear, cold water. During this time you must put away all anger and harshness and speak kindly to all persons. Thus says the Father."

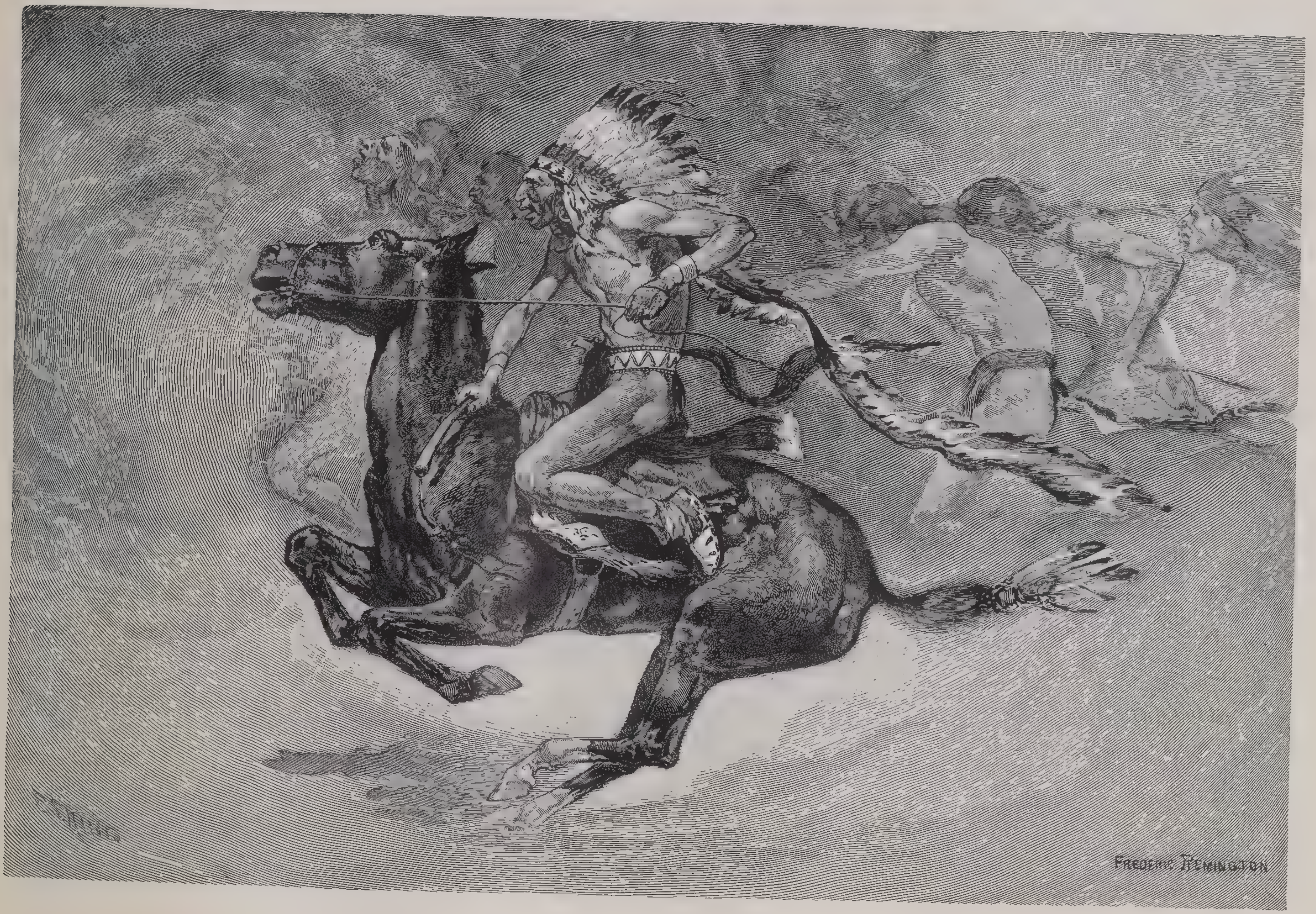
There was something lofty in all this and it moved men very deeply and the chief listened intently to it all.

On the third night of his preaching I was present, for my father had sent for me to come. After drawing from me a promise to tell no white man, he described all that had happened. I was not at first impressed. "It is foolish," I said.

"Nevertheless you must come and see this man. He is a wonderful magician. I do not understand him."

The meeting took place in the chief's tepee, which was large and strong. As I entered I saw many men and women sitting just outside the door in little groups, but only about fifteen people had been invited to join the circle which I soon found was formed to rehearse some of the ceremonial songs of the Messiah. A small, clear fire glowed in the center of the lodge, and the chief's strong face was fixed in its place at the back of the lodge. On his right was The Kicking Bear. On his left was a vacant place; this my father took. At a sign from the chief I sat next my father.

Shortly after our entry the chief lit his pipe, and after offering it to the Earth Spirits and to the Spirits Above, handed it to his visitor. The Bear made the same offering, and after smoking passed

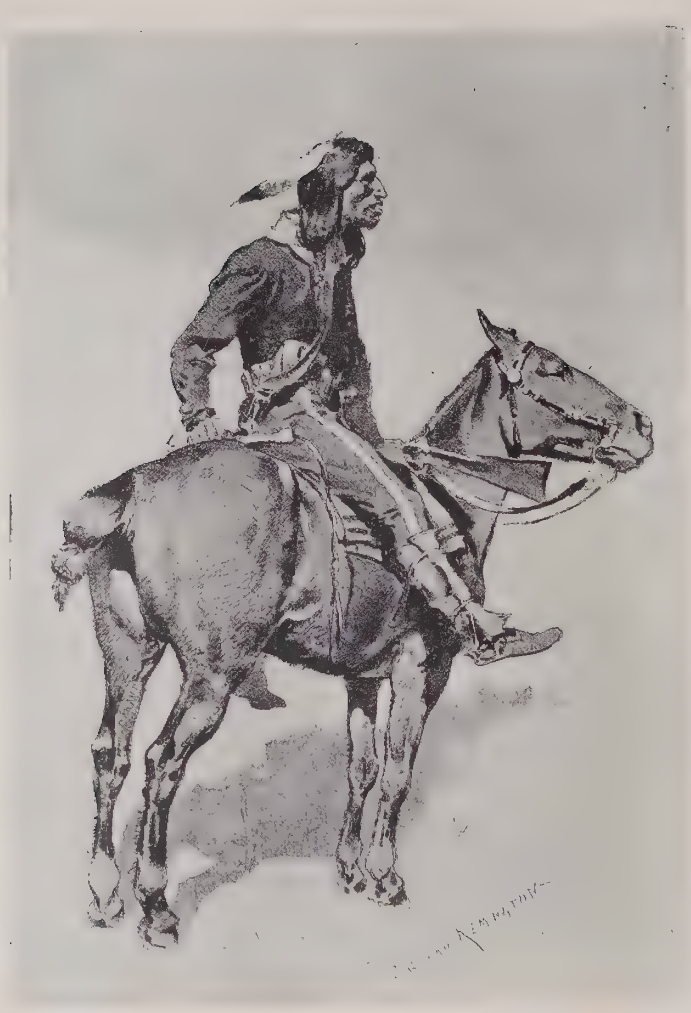


A Fantasy from the Pony War Dance

Among the many interesting features of the pageant given on special occasions by the Blackfoot Indians on their reservation in Canada, the most spectacular is the Pony War Dance, or the Departure for Battle. *In this scene about sixty young men take part, riding horses as wild as themselves. The acting is fierce—not like the conduct of a mimic battle on our stage—but performed with the desperate zest of men who hope for distinction in war.*

Illustration from
CHARTERING A NATION
by Julian Ralph

Originally published in
HARPER'S MAGAZINE, *December, 1891*



Chis-Chis-Chash Scout On the Flanks

The Cheyenne, or—to use the name the Cheyennes apply to themselves—the Chis-Chis-Chash, scouts belonged to the corps from Pine Ridge organized on that reservation, and, with other Cheyennes from Tongue River, rendered valuable service to Uncle Sam during the Sioux outbreak of 1890 in South Dakota. In December of that year these brave Indians had many a skirmish with the savage Sioux, who, clothed in the ghost shirt, went on the war path, taking refuge in the Bad Lands—a region that seemed made for stratagem and murder, with nothing to witness its mysteries but the cold blue winter sky.

Illustration from
LIEUTENANT CASEY'S LAST SCOUT
by Frederic Remington

Originally published in
Pony Tracks, Harper & Brothers, 1895

it on. So it went round the circle. When the chief had it in his hands once more, The Kicking Bear and his five companions rose and, stretching their hands to the west, stood still while The Bear prayed:

"O great spirit in the west
Our Father,
Take pity on us. We are poor and weak.
Send us good tidings.
Help us to see the good land.
Help us to see our loved ones."

Then he began singing a song—a song of promise—and these were the words:

"The Father says so,
He has promised surely
You shall see your dead once more.
They will come to life again.
You shall see your kindred
Of the spirit land.
This the Father saith
To his faithful ones."

This song moved me, though I was a doubter. It was sung with great vigor and earnestness. It was the opening song of the dance, The Bear explained to us, and then all sat down, and one by one the visitors took up and sang the songs they had learned. There were many of them and they were based upon the same idea—that of a resurrection of the dead, the renewal of the worn-out old earth and the return of the buffalo.

As they sang my head was filled with many great but confused thoughts. In that light, with those surroundings, any magic seemed possible. It was thus that the disciples of Christ of Galilee came together and talked of his message. I had listened often to the white man's religion, and yet the hymns of the martyrs could not move me as did these songs. The past and the present fused together strangely in my mind as the ancient shining winds blew and the old rejoicing days came back.

You shall reset the tepees.
You shall eat pemmican once more.
You shall hang up the buffalo meat.
And there shall be plenty everywhere.
You shall live and not die in the old world which returns anew.
You shall chase the buffalo.
You shall gayly race on the bright prairie.

These were the promises of the songs, and as the visitors sang my despairing people became like little children; their hearts melted, they laughed and wept and shouted in time to the music. Some strange power seemed to go with the motions of The Bear's hands. We all seemed to be looking upon the very scenes of which he sang, and my throat closed with an emotion I could not control.

An old man, called Looking Eagle, suddenly rose and, stretching forth his hands, cried out in a thrilling voice:

"I see it—the new land! I can see the buffalo feeding in myriads. It is Spring and the grass is new. My father stands at the door of his lodge. He calls with his hand. My mother is there. Ho! I come, my father."

Then he fell on the ground and The Kicking Bear and his friends joined hands and, breaking into a song which made my own heart leap, they began to dance in a circle about the fire:

"The whole world of the dead is returning.
Our nation is coming, is coming, is coming.
The eagle has brought us the message,
Bearing the word of the Father—
The word and the wish of the Father.
Over the glad new earth they are coming,
Our dead come driving the elk and the deer.
See them hurrying the herds of the bison.
This the Father has promised,
This the Father has given."

One by one those sitting gave way and rose and joined the dance, till only the chief, Slohan, and I remained seated. My father joined them at the last, and outside the tepee the voices of women could be heard catching and trying the song. It was agonizing to hear. It strained every heart to bursting with longing and sadness.

Suddenly The Bear's head began to rock violently from side to side; it seemed as if it would wrench itself from its place. His eyes set in a dreadful stare, his mouth fixed in a horrible gape. Then shaking himself free, he fell close to the fire, face downward.

The others danced for a little while longer, then took seats and waited for the return of the spirit of their priest. Looking Eagle still slept.

The Sitting Bull sat in silence, smoking gravely, slowly, but his hand trembled. It was plain that he, too, longed to believe in the dance, but he could not. My own nerves were quivering with the excitement and I waited with almost breathless eagerness for the waking of the sleepers.

It was a long time—it seemed that it was nearly morning—when The Bear began to stir again and to rub his eyes as if wakened from sleep. He was very quiet and his voice was gentle as he said: "I have been with the Father. He gave me another message to The Sitting Bull. This it is: '*All the people to the South are dancing my dance. Will the chief of all the Sioux walk behind his nation?*'"

Then the chief said, "When my son there,"—he touched my arm—"or one of my trusted warriors can go to the spirit world and return to tell me it is true, then I may believe. If this religion is true all other deeds are worthless. Bring me proof. My ears are open, my eyes are not yet dim. If these songs are true, then I shall weep no more. If they are not true, then I wish to die. Let us hold a dance to-morrow." And with a sign he dismissed us, but he himself remained alone with Looking Eagle, who still lay motionless where he had fallen.

XI

THE BREAKING OF THE PEACE PIPE

A KNOWLEDGE of the dance spread like flame throughout all the Grand River district, and young and old began to flock to The Sitting

Bull's camp, eager to hear more, eager to experiment. "We also wish to see our friends who have gone before us," they said. "We wish to hear what they say. Teach us the way of the trance."

I felt the influence of their thought very strongly what time I sat among them, but afterward, when I had returned to the agency, it appeared but the rankest folly, and when others asked me about it I always said: "It is but a foolish thing; do not value it." But my words did not check the wave of belief in it.

While no special pains were taken to conceal the fact from the white people, it was several days before the agent had any knowledge of Kicking Bear or his mission. This agent, let me say, was a good man, but jealous of his authority, and when he learned that the chief had himself invited The Kicking Bear into the reservation he was angry and said, "I won't have any of this nonsense here," and calling Crow, lieutenant of the police, he said: "Crow, go down to The Sitting Bull's house and tell him this Kicking Bear and Messiah business must stop. Put Kicking Bear off the reservation at once!"

I was very much alarmed by the order, and waited anxiously to learn what the chief would say. I feared his revolt.

The next day the Crow returned from Rock Creek like a man walking in his sleep. He could give the agent no intelligible account of himself or of what he had seen. "He is a wonder worker," he repeated, "I couldn't put him away. When he took my hand I was weak as a child. I saw the dance, and when he waved a feather I became dizzy, I fell to the ground, and my eyes were turned inward."

The agent stared at him as if he were crazy; then he turned to me and said: "Iapi, I wish you'd go down and see what all this hocus-pocus means. Take a couple of policemen with you and make sure that they start this mischief maker on his way home. And tell The Sitting Bull that I want to see him. Say to him the agent expects him to fire Kicking Bear off the reservation."

I did not tell him that I already knew what was being done. I felt that if some one must carry such a message to the chief it was well for me to do it, for he was in no mood to be reproved like a boy. I took no policemen, but rode away alone with many misgivings.

No sooner had I passed the fort than I regretted my acceptance of the mission. After all, I was Uncapappa and I honored my chief. Whenever I entered the shadow of a tepee I was no longer alien; I fused with my tribe. The gravity and order of my chieftain's lodge were pleasant to me, and the sound of the women's songs melted my bones. I was not white; I was red. Acquiring the language of the conquering race had not changed my heart.

For all these reasons I saw that I was set forth on a dishonorable mission. To speak the words of the agent were impossible to me. When I met Circling Thunder, an old playmate of mine, and learned that many were dancing, my face stiffened. I had hoped to be able to have a word with the chief in private.

"Do you believe in it?" I asked.

My friend shook his head. "I don't know. Many claim to have visited the spirit world—and Looking Eagle brought back a handful of pemmican, so they say. The buffalo were thick over there and the people were very happy."

"How do you know it was pemmican?"

"I tasted it."

"Perhaps it was only beef."

"It may be so," he said, but his eyes were still dim with dream.

Many of those whom I met were in this state of doubt. They wished to be convinced. It was so sweet to dream of the old-time world, and yet they could not quite believe it. They stood too near the stern reality of hunger and cold, and yet my people are a race of seers. To them the dream has not yet lost its marvelous portent. In time of trouble they go upon the hills and wait for the vision which shall instruct and comfort them.

In my youth I had shared in these beliefs. I had had my days of fasting and prayer; yes, I too had entered the sleep which reveals. I had met and talked with birds and animals, and once I felt the hand of my dead mother move in my hair. I had fasted until I could walk among the painted tepees of the spirit world and I had gazed on the black herds of buffalo.

My training among scholars had given me a new understanding of these conditions, but I could not impart my knowledge to my people. My wisdom was accounted alien and therefore to be distrusted. Of what avail to argue with them when the frenzy was upon them?

It was brilliant October, very warm and hazy, and our cruel, treacherous land was indolently beautiful. The sky was without cloud—a whitish blue—and the plain, covered with tawny short grass on the uplands, and with purple and golden garments of bluejoint in the hollows, seemed to lift on every side like a gigantic bowl. My horse's hoofs drummed on the dry sod as I hurried forward.

This is an inexorable land—a land in which man should be free to migrate like the larks or the buffalo. In the old days we never thought of living on these high, wind-swept spaces. They were merely our hunting grounds. Our winter camps were always beside the river, behind the deep banks, in the shelter of the oaks and cottonwoods. In those days the plain seemed less ferocious than now, when we are forced to cross it in all kinds of weather, poorly clothed. In the days of the buffalo we chose our time and place to migrate; now we were fastened to one spot like chained coyotes.

As I came to the hill which overlooked the wooded flat I saw a great many tepees set about the chief's cabin, and I perceived also that the dance was going on. Occasionally a cry reached me, pulsing faintly through the hazy air. In some such way, perhaps, the white fisher folk of Galilee drew together to greet the coming of their Messiah. Was this Saviour of the west any more incredible than Christ?

So I mused as I rode slowly down the hill. What if it were all true? The white man who claims to know all things believes in his Bible and his Bible is full of miracles.

Soon I could hear the song. It was the sad song I had heard them sing in the chief's tepee. It was in most violent opposition to the sunlit earth and the soft caressing wind, and reached my heart like the wail of a mourning woman. Soon I was near enough to hear the wistful words. It was all of entreaty:

"Our Father, we come.
We come to you weeping.
Take pity on us, O Father.
We are poor and weak,
Without you we can do nothing.
Help us, O Father.
Help us to see the old world,
The happy hunting ground of the buffalo,
The glorious land of our childhood.
Hear us, Great Spirit."

They were dancing in a great circle, some sixty men and women, their hands interlacing, their eyes on the ground. Each dancer wore a plain buckskin shirt without ornament. No one carried a weapon of any kind. They had deliberately gone far back of the white man, discarding all things on which his desolating hand had been laid. On each head (even of the women) waved an eagle plume, the sacred feather, and all were painted with a red paint, which the Mato had brought with him—a sacred paint he called it. Around them were many others, watching, and here and there on the ground lay those who were entranced.

Just as I came up the song ended and Mato, who stood in the circle, lifted a peculiar wand in his hand and cried out like a priest: "Think hard only of that which you wish to see in your sleep, and it will be given to you. The old shall be young and the sick shall be made well. Put away all anger and hatred and turn your thoughts to the Messiah in the west who listens to all his children."

Then some one started another song and they began again to dance. I looked for the chief, and saw him sitting in the shadow of a small tree close to the circle of dancers. My father, Slohan, Circling Hawk, and another whom I do not recall, sat with him. They were all very grave and very intent. They hardly saw me and my task grew heavy and hard.

I motioned to my father and he came out, and I said: "I am from the agency. I am hungry and so is my horse."

He sent a boy with my pony and took me to his tepee near by, and there I ate some bread and meat in silence. When I had finished I began: "Father, I have come to stop the dance and to put the priest away."

My father looked troubled. "Do you come from the agent?"

"Yes, he has heard of the dance and his orders are to stop it."

"My son, all that is bad. It makes my heart sore. Do not speak to the chief now. Wait till evening, when he is weary. The agent is wrong. There is no harm in this dance. Has not the Messiah said, '*Do not strike anyone;* leave all punishment to the Great Spirit?' Go back and tell the agent there is no harm in it."

I did not listen well, for the song outside was wilder and sadder each moment. They were dancing very fast now, and the ground, bare and very dry, had been tramped into dust, fine as flour, and this rose from under their feet like smoke, half concealing those on the leeward side. All were singing a piteous song of entreaty. The women's voices especially pierced me with their note of agonized appeal. It was a song to make me shudder—the voice of a dying people crying out for life and pleading for the return of the happy past. I could not understand how the white men could listen to it and not be made gentle.

The chief gazed intently at the circle. He seemed waiting in rigid expectancy, his face deeply lined and very sad. He looked like one threescore and ten sitting so. It was plain that he did not yet permit himself to believe in the message. He, too, felt the pain and weariness of the world, but still he could not join in the song. His mind was too clear and strong to be easily confused.

The interest was now very great. Waves of excitement seemed to run over the circle and those who watched. Shouts mingled with the singing. The principal song, which they repeated endlessly, was the Messiah's promise of eternal life:

"There the Father comes,
There the Father comes,
Speaking as he flies.
Calling, as he comes, this joyous word,
'You shall live again,' he calls,
'*You shall live beyond the grave.*'
He is calling as he comes."

Many did not sing; they only cried out for help, entreating to be shown those who had died. "Oh, hear me! Great Spirit, let me see my little one—my boy; let me hear his voice," pleaded one woman, and her voice shook me till my hair moved as if a spirit passed.

Some of the women's faces were distorted with grief, and a kind of nervous action which they could not control seized upon them. One by one as they began to show this tension, Mato and his helpers confronted them, waving before their eyes a feather on a wand and uttering a hoarse chant, monotonous and rapid, "Ha—ha—ha—ha—ha—*hah!*" until the frenzied one, convulsed and dreaming, fell into the ring and lay stiff and stark in the dirt.

But the ring did not halt. The fall of each new convert seemed to add new vigor to the song, for each hoped to be the next one smitten. Suddenly Shato, dropping the hands of those dancing near him, flung his hands to the sky with a gesture as if he would tear the sun from its place. The hooked intensity of his fingers was terrible to see. He remained fixed in that way, rigid as iron, yet standing on his feet firm as an oak. No one touched him; on the contrary, all were careful not to disturb those who were in trance. Another man stood at bay, buffeting the dancers to keep them from trampling upon his wife, who, being sick of some wasting disease, had joined the circle, seeking health of the Great Spirit.

As I looked my heart contracted. It seemed that I was looking upon the actual dissolution—the death pangs—of my race. My learning was for the moment of no avail. I shook like a reed in the gust of this primeval passion. Was it insanity or was it some inexplicable divine force capable in very truth of uniting the quick and the dead in one convulsive, rapturous coalition?

A thrill of momentary belief swept over me. Was it not better to end it all, to die and go with all my people to the happy hunting grounds! The white man's world, what was it but a world of care and grief?

The songs continued, but they grew quieter. Several of those who called loudest now lay silent in the dust. Those who circled and sang were keener of eye and calmer of feature. These were they who reasoned, and to them the trance could not come. I began to see that those who had taken on the dream were not the most intelligent but the most emotional men and women of my tribe, those who were weakened by the loss of dear ones.

The song was no longer a cry—it had beautiful words. It grew more joyous:

"Do you see the world a-coming?
A new serener world is near.
The eagle brings the message to our tribe.
Thus the Father sayeth.
Covering all the plain they come,
The Buffalo and elk and deer.
The crow has brought the message to the tribe.
Thus the Father sayeth,
Thus he gives us cheer."

At the end of this song, four times repeated, the dancers unclasped hands and sat down on the earth. As they did this the chief arose and, stepping into the circle, took a seat near Mato, who arose and, lifting his hands to the west, again prayed silently for a moment, then said:

"My friends, you see the words of the Messiah are true words. Many are asleep. They will return soon and tell us of their good journey to the spirit world. Ever since the Messiah talked to me

I have thought upon what he said and I see only good in it. It is a sweet religion. The white man's religion is not for us. Its words are all strange. It deals with unknown animals and tells of far-off countries. The names of the chiefs we do not understand, but this new religion all can understand. It is filled with familiar words. It is for us. Our Messiah has told us that all our dead are to come back to the earth, and as the earth is too small for such a throng he must remove the white man. He will also bring heaven down to make the world wider, and then all the red men will be able to dwell together in friendship. There will be no more war, only hunting and feasting and games. This good world will come to us if we do as he commands."

At this moment Chasing Hawk, who acted as usher, brought to the circle a woman who had just wakened out of a trance. Her face was shining with happiness, but her tongue was thick, she could barely make herself heard. As she spoke the chief listened intently.

"What did you see?" asked Mato.

"I saw my little one," she replied.

"Where was he? What was he doing?"

"He was playing in the grass, in a beautiful country. My grandmother was near, cooking for him."

Mato called her answers aloud to all who listened, and everyone crowded near to hear the glories of the land from which her spirit had returned. Cries of joy arose in swift echo of the priest's shouting, but the chief's face remained gravely meditative.

When this woman was led away Eagle Holder, another dreamer, came into the circle, one who needed no crier. He was a proud orator. Reaching out his hand in a gesture of exultation, he cried:

"In my sleep I saw a vast eagle coming toward me. He came rushing; the noise of his wings was like a storm, his eyes were red like the moon at dusk. As he came near I caught him by the neck, and with a rush he carried me away." Cries of astonishment broke forth. "He swept away with me high up and toward the east;

the wind cried about my ears and for a time I could see nothing; all was mist. At last he began to circle and I looked away and I saw the new land of the Messiah." ("Hah! Hah!" called the people.) "It was a prairie country" (the women began to sing) "with countless buffalo feeding" ("Ah! Ah!") "and lakes with great white birds sailing about. On the bank of the lake was a circle of tepees and they were made of skins whitened by clay, and they were very large and clean and new. A hunting party was just riding forth; they were very happy and sang as they went."

He paused abruptly, while the women wailed in rapture. At last he continued: "Then the eagle entered a cloud and I saw no more. I woke and found myself here on the ground."

This story, magnificently told though it was, affected the hearers less than the shining, ecstatic face of the mother who had seen her spirit child. Her slow, dreamy utterance was more eloquent than the vivid gestures and musical voice of Eagle Holder.

One by one others awoke and told of meeting friends and revisiting old scenes. Some told of people they had never met in life, and minutely described lodges they had never entered. These stories awoke wild cries of amazement and joy. It was plain that many believed. I had not seen my people so happy since I was a child, before the battle of the Big Horn.

At last when all had spoken they arose and joined hands and began singing once more; then the chief rose and left the circle, and I, intercepting him, said: "Chief, I bring a message to you." He made a motion which means follow, and I accompanied him to his tepee, which he loved because of its associations with old days, and to which he went for meditation and council.

It would be wrong if I did not confess that I knew the chief distrusted me, for he did. After I had taken my position under the agent he was less free to speak his mind to me, and this was a grief to me. My father saw us go and joined us, and I was glad of his presence. His kind old face made it easier for me to begin.

The chief took his seat at the back of the lodge and said: "Speak. I listen."

"Sire," I said, "the agent has heard bad things of this dance on other reservations, and some days ago he sent policemen down here to forbid it. He now hears it is still going on and he has sent me to say that Mato, the messenger, must go away and the dance must stop."

I could see the veins of his neck fill with hot blood as he listened, and when I had finished he said: "Are we dogs to be silenced by kicking! You say to the agent that the white men have beaten us and left us naked of every good thing, but they shall not take away our religion. I will not obey this command! I have said it!"

Here my father broke in, saying to me: "You yourself have told me that you saw among the white people dreams like this. Why do they seek to prevent us? You have read us the white man's sacred Big Book, and you say it is full of medicine dreams. Why should we not dream also?"

I then replied: "*I* do not come commanding these things. It is the agent who says them. Do not blame me."

The chief, who had regained his composure, interposed quietly: "My son, you are right. We should not blame you, but the one who sent you. Therefore I say take these words to the agent: '*I will not give up the dance.*'"

In the hope of persuading him, I asked: "Do you believe in the dance?"

"I do not know," he replied. "I am watching, I am listening. It is like the white man's religion—very wonderful and very difficult to believe. I wish to try it and see. The white men are very wise, yet their preachers say that the sun stood still for Joshua, and Christ, their great Medicine Man, healed the lame and raised the dead."

"But that was long ago," I hastened to say.

"If such wonders happened then they can happen now," he answered. Then he passionately broke forth: "I desire this new earth. My people are in despair, their hearts are utterly gone. We need help. My warriors will soon be like the Chinaman at the fort, fit only to wash windowpanes. Our rations are being cut off. What is there to look forward to? Nothing. I saw in the east many poor people. They worked very hard and wore ragged clothes. All were not rich and happy. Among the white men my people would be only other poor people, ragged and hungry, creeping about, eating scraps of food like hungry curs. I fear for them, therefore my ears are open to the words of this new religion which assures me that the old world—the world of my fathers—is to return. You say the agent is displeased. Is there anything I can do which does not displease him? The white men have their religion—they pray and sing. Why should not we sing if we have heart to do so? Go ask him if he is afraid that the Messiah has come of a truth, and that the white man is to be swept away."

"He thinks it is a war dance," I said. "He is afraid it will stir up strife."

"Go tell him what you have seen. Say to him that it is a peaceful dance. There are no weapons here; there is no talk of fighting. It is a magical prayer. Mato says those who lie out there are with the spirits. You heard them tell what they saw. If these tales are true and if we could all be as they, then would the white man's world indeed vanish like smoke and the pasture of the buffalo come again. It is strange—that I know—but the white man's religion is also very hard to believe. The priest will tell you stories just as wonderful, and the preacher, too. Their Messiah was born in a stable among cattle; ours appears among the mountains. Their Christ rose from the dead. So does ours. Their Christ came to the poor people, so they say. Are we so despised of God that we cannot have our Messiah, too? I do not say all this is true, I only wish to test it and see."

I could see that his clear mind could not accept the new religion, yet his heart desired it deeply. Once he had said: "I do not understand your Christ and his teaching. I must have time to think; I will not be pushed into it," and as he had often reproved his people for saying yes to everything the white man said, so now he was equally cautious, only he was older, with a deeper longing to be comforted.

My task was only half completed and I said: "Chief, the agent told me to say to you, 'Put Mato away.' I beg you to come with me and meet the agent and explain to him the meaning of the dance, and then maybe he will not insist on this inhospitable thing."

The chief's face grew very stern. "The agent is a dog! He insults me. I will not see him! If he wishes to talk with me let him come here. I am waiting."

My father made me a sign to go, and I went away. I could hear them conversing in low voices, but I could not understand what they said. At last my father called, and I went in again.

The chief looked less grim of lip and said to me, "Very well, Mato will go to-night."

"Good," I said. "At ten o'clock to-night Bull Head and I will come to take them across the river."

My father and I went out and left him sitting alone.

When I returned at ten o'clock with Bull Head the chief's lodge was filled with people. The women were weeping and the men were sullen. As I entered the tepee Mato was speaking. The chief sat smoking, with his eyes fixed on the floor. The priest was saying:

"You see how it is! The red man can keep nothing from the white man, who is jealous even of our religion. Washington would deprive us of our dreams. The agent is a wolf. Nevertheless, I will go, for my mission here is fulfilled. I have spoken the words of the Father; I have taught you the ceremonials. Henceforth you can test for yourself the truth of the *word*." Then standing erect and in line the six messengers of the Messiah lifted the palms of their hands toward the west and prayed silently. A little later they began to sing this song:

"My children take this road,
My children go this way,
Says our Saviour.
It is a goodly road,
Says the Father;
It leads to joyous lands,
Says the Father.'

As they sang the people began to cry out, "Stay and tell us more," but Mato led the way out of the lodge.

As I stood at the door, ready to follow him, the chief stood upon his feet, with a look on his face which silenced every one who saw it; it was fierce, yet it was exalted. Holding his pipe in his outstretched hands, his beloved pipe which he had carried since his first chieftainship, he said: "Here break I my peace pipe. If this religion is true then there is no more war. If it is not true, then I wish to die as a warrior dies, fighting!" With a gesture he snapped the stem in pieces. All the people cried out, and with a heart cold with fear I went forth into the night.

My chief's last war with the white invader had begun.

XII

THE CHIEF PROPOSES A TEST

MEANWHILE the dance was going on not only among all the Sioux, but among the Cheyenne, Arapahoe, and Shoshone peoples, and the settlers of many states were greatly alarmed. They pretended to believe the ceremonial was warlike. They knew nothing of the songs or prayers. Cowboys, drunk and desiring a little amusement, raced into the border towns shouting, "The Sioux are on the warpath!" and whole settlements, frenzied with fear, fled to the east, crying loudly for the government to send troops. "Stop this outbreak," became the demand.

All this pressure and excitement made our situation worse. Those who believed said, "You see how it is, the white people are afraid of our religion; they are seeking to prevent the coming of the new world"; and those reckless ones who were willing to fight cried out: "Make ready. Let us war!"

Letters and telegrams poured in upon the agent at the Standing Rock, asking for a true statement of affairs. To all these he replied, "There is no danger, these Indians are peaceful"; but he took occasion in his answers to defame my chief.

In this he overshot his mark, for in calling The Sitting Bull a man of no force, a liar, and a coward, he became unreasonable. To fear a man so small and mean was childish. He also misstated the religion of the dance. He sneered at my father and others as "Indians lately developed into medicine men," and ended by saying, "The Sitting Bull is making rebellion among his people." Forgetting all the favorable reports he had many times made of my chief, he falsely said, "The Sitting Bull has been a disturbing element ever since his return in 1883."

What could such a man know of the despair into which my people had fallen? He was hard, unimaginative, and jealous of his authority. He was also a bigot and it is hard for anyone not a poet or philosopher to be just to a people holding a different view of the world. Race hatred and religious prejudices stand like walls between the red man and the white. The Sioux cannot comprehend the priest and the priest will not tolerate the Sioux. Our agent became angry, arrogant, and unreasonable. He felt that his government was in question. His pride was hurt.

For a few days after I reported the departure of Mato all was quiet and the agent believed that the frenzy was over so far as his wards were concerned. He was only anxious that The Sitting Bull and his followers should not know how deeply their dances had stirred the settlements. Nevertheless, the chief knew, and it helped him to retain some faith in the magic he was testing. He did not refer to the breaking of his peace pipe, but he declined to give up the dance.

To his friend, John Carignan, the teacher, he said: "The agent complains that I feed my cattle to those who come to dance. What does it matter? If the buffalo come back I will not need them. If the new religion is a lie then I do not care to raise cattle. The Great Spirit has sent me a message. He has said, '*If you wish to live join the dance I have given.*' Whether this message is true or not I cannot yet tell. I am seeking proof."

Against the bitter words of the agent I will put the words of John Carignan, who kept the school near The Sitting Bull's home. This man speaks our language. "I knew the chief well," he said, "and I saw no evil in him. He was an Indian, but I can't blame him for that."

During this troublesome period my chief went often to see the teacher of his children. Jack was the one white man with whom he could talk freely, and together they argued upon the new religion. Jack liked my chief and told me so one day as we were discussing the agent's attitude toward the dance. "Often the chief came to eat with my family and he has always borne himself with dignity and honor. I have always found him considerate and unassuming."

"Our religion seems foolish to you, but so does yours to me," my chief said. "The Baptists and Methodists and Presbyterians and Catholics all have a different God. Why cannot we have one of our own? Why does the agent seek to take away our religion? My race is dying. Our God will soon die with us. If this new religion is not true, then what does it matter? I do not know what to believe. If I could dream like others and visit the spirit land myself, then it would be easy for me to believe, but the trance does not come to me. It passes me by. I help others to see their dead, but I am not aided."

"That is it precisely," replied the teacher. "See the kind of men who go into the trance. Your strong, clear-headed men do not believe."

"That is true," the chief admitted, "but I am hoping some of my head men may yet enter the trance. Perhaps we do not know how to prepare the way."

By this he meant that they had not learned how to hypnotize, for that is what the dance became. It was like a meeting of spiritualists who sit for visions. It was like the revival meetings of the Free Methodists or the old-time Shakers or Quakers. My friend Davies wrote me a long letter wherein he said: "It is foolish, as you say, but no more absurd to my mind than scores of other forms of religious ecstasy. My advice is let it run; it will wear itself out. Movements of this kind grow by opposition."

All that he said was true, but, like the chief, I could not help hoping something would happen, for when they sang their songs warmed my heart and made my learning of little weight. The painted arrows, the fluttering feathers, the symbolic figures—every little thing had its appeal to me. When they raised their quivering palms in the air and cried to the Messiah in the west, I could scarcely restrain myself from joining in their supplication. This may seem strange, but it is true and you will never comprehend this last despairing cry of my race if I do not tell you the truth.

We believed in what we were. We had the pride of race. We were fulfilling our destiny as hunters and freemen. Do you think that in ten years you can make my proud people bow the neck to the scourge of a white man's daily hatred? Is the Great Spirit a bungler? Does he draw a figure on the earth, only to wipe it away as a child writes upon a slate?

"Why are we so thrust upon and degraded? It must be that we have angered the Great Spirit. We must go back to the point wherein our old trail is found," so my father argued.

The line that divides the mysterious and the commonplace is very slender, in the minds of my people. You do not realize that. They take up a cartridge. How wonderful it is! How is it made? A knife—what gives the point its gleam and its spring? The grass blade, what causes it to thrust from the earth? The clouds, where do they go—what are they? To the west of us is the Crow country; beyond that, who knows? You must put yourself in the place of those who think in this way before you judge them harshly. Many of these things I now understand, but I do not know why men are born and why they die. I do not know why the sun brings forth the grass.

My chief comprehended more than most men of his tribe, but to him the world was just as mysterious as to me. It did him no good to study the white man's religions. They were so many and so contradictory that he was confused. He had always been a prayerful man—and had kept the Sun Dance, and all the ceremonials of the Uncapappas carefully. He was a grave soul, doing nothing thoughtlessly. He always asked the Great Spirit for guidance, yet he was never a medicine man, as the white men say. He did not become so during this dance. He helped to hypnotize the dancers, but so did others; that did not mean that they were priests or medicine men—it only meant they had the power to induce these trances.

It was a time of great bewilderment, of question and of doubt. No one thought of the present; all were dreaming of the past, hoping to bring the past. The future was black chaos unless the Great Spirit should restore their world of the buffalo.

The dance went on with steadily growing excitement. The autumn remained very mild and favorable to the ceremony, and yet there were fewer people in it than the agent supposed. Those most active continued to be the mourners. Those who had lost children crowded to the dance, as white people go to spiritualistic seances, in the hope of touching the hands of their babes and hearing the voices of their daughters. They sincerely believed that they met their dead and they deeply resented the brutal order of the agent who would keep them from this sweet reunion.

It was deeply moving to look upon their happy faces as they stood and called in piercing voices: "I saw my child—my little son. He was playing with his small bow and arrows. I called him and he ran to me. He was very happy with his grandfather. The sun was shining on the flowers and no one was hungry. My boy clung to my hand. I did not wish to come back. Oh, teach me the way to go again!"

I think the number of those who believed that the new world of the buffalo was coming, that the white man would be swept away, were few, but hundreds considered it possible to go to the spirit land and see those who were dead, and they resented, as my chief, the interference of the government. There was nothing worth while left in the world but this, and they used bitter words when they were commanded to lay this comforting faith aside. "Why should our spirit meetings be taken from us?" they asked of me.

In spite of the wind, the dust, and the blazing October sun, a veil of mysterious passion lay over the camp. The children were withdrawn from school to participate in the worship. Nothing else was talked of. During the day, as the old chiefs counciled, the women gathered together and told their experiences. There were deceivers among those who took part in this, and many who were self-deceived, but for the most part they were in deadly earnestness; the exultation on their faces could not be simulated. They moved in a cloud of joyous memories, with no care, no thought of the Great Father's commands. They were borne above all other considerations but this—"How may we bring back the vanished world of the fathers?"

Up at the agent's office was an absolutely different world. There hate and cynical coarseness ruled. To go from the dance to the agent was a bitter experience for me. I was forced into deception. No one dared to speak of the dance, except in terms of laughter or disbelief. All the renegades in the pay of the government joined in the jests and told ribald stories of the chief and of the ceremonies. They could not understand what it meant. As for me, I said little, but I foresaw trouble for my people and sorrow for myself.

The chief clerk hated me and all Indians. He was a most capable man, but sour and sullen to everyone who did not appeal to him. He had no children, no wife, and no faith. His voice was a snarl, his face a chill wind. He never spoke to an Indian that he did not curse. The agent was not so, but he was a zealot impatient of the old, eager to make a record for himself and the post. Loyal to the white man's ideal, he was unsympathetic and harsh and materialistic in dealing with the traditional prejudices of my race.

He sent for Jack, the teacher, and asked him to come up and talk with him. "Tell me all about it," he said, "What is the meaning of it?"

In reply Jack said, soberly: "They are very much in earnest about this new religion of theirs, but they are peaceable. The Sitting Bull talked with me a long time yesterday, and I found it a hard matter to meet his arguments, which he bases on the miracles of the Bible. The dancers are told to lay aside all that the white man has made and fix their minds on what they wish to see most of all. They go into a trance and lie for hours. When they wake they are very happy. They come and tell me their dreams and some of them are very beautiful. My advice is to let them alone. It is a craze like the old-fashioned Methodist revival. It will die out as winter comes on."

This testimony by a man who understood our language and was in daily contact with The Sitting Bull band led the agent to pursue a calmer course. He decided to wait the ebbing of the excitement.

Unfortunately, a long letter he had written to Washington about "the Messiah craze" was given to the reporters, and the daily papers were instantly filled with black headlines introducing foolish and false accounts of what was taking place. Writers hurried to the Standing Rock and wired alarming reports of what they heard, and all this reacted unfavorably upon the dancers.

The agent then laid the burden of the blame upon my chief. "He is a reactionary," he said; "he is a disturber and has been from the first. He has opposed every treaty and has insisted at all times on being treated as a chief," and in all his letters and talks he continued to speak ill of him.

He sent word by me and by Jack, saying to The Sitting Bull: "Come to the agency. I want to talk with you. Stop this foolish dance and come here and camp for a while where I can talk with you. The white people are alarmed and you must stop this dance."

The chief, embittered by the agent's attack upon him, refused to go to the Standing Rock. "I am not a dog to be whistled at. I will not go to the agent to be insulted and beaten," and he called his old guard of "Silent Eaters" around him. "The agent threatens to imprison me and break up the dance. If he comes to fight he will find us ready."

Day by day the feeling between the agency and its police on the one side, and the chief and the dancers on the other, got more alarming, and the agent was obliged to send many telegrams to Washington and the outside world to quiet the fears of the settlers, and at last he decided to go down to Rock Creek and see for himself what was going on. He should have done so before.

He asked me to go as interpreter, and this I did, but very reluctantly, for it put me too much on his side.

He planned to come upon the scene of the dance suddenly, and many were dancing as we rode up to the outer circle of lodges. The word went about that the agent was come, but no one stopped dancing on that account. They were too much in earnest to give heed to any authority. Some of those to whom he called replied with words of contempt, defying his command, and I, who knew the terrible power of the President's army, trembled as I saw the face of the agent blacken.

"What foolery!" he said to me. "This has got to stop! Go tell The Sitting Bull to come to me."

I made my way to where the chief sat, and told him what the agent had demanded.

I could see that he associated me with the renegades who fawned upon the agent, and he listened to what I said with cold, stern face. I pleaded with him to do as he was commanded. I informed him of the fury of fear which had fallen upon the settlers and I warned him that the soldiers would come to put a stop to the dance.

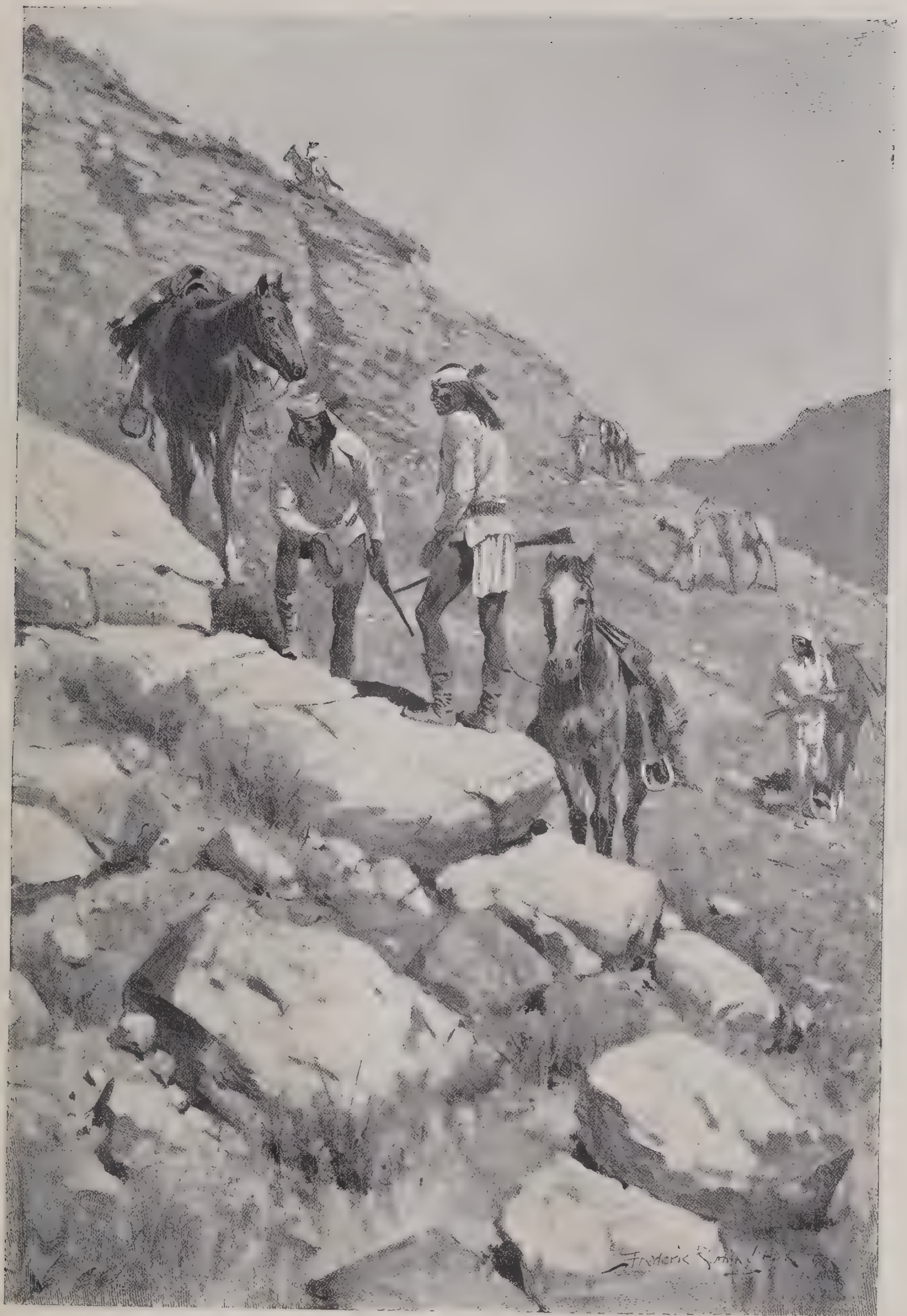
To all this he made no reply other than to say: "Since the agent has come to see me, tell him I will talk with him in the morning. I am busy now. I cannot leave the dance."

The agent was furious when I told him this, and as we drove off down to the school muttered a threat, "I'll make him suffer for this, the insolent old dog." We found Carignan, the teacher, almost alone at the school. The Sitting Bull had said: "If this religion is true, then it is more important than your books," and had told his people to withdraw their children from their studies. "If the white man's world is coming to an end, of what use is it to learn his ways?" he argued.

To Carignan the agent talked freely of the chief. "He must be brought low," he declared, wrathfully. "His power must be broken. I will see him in the morning and give him one more chance to quit peaceably. If he does not I will arrest him. He will find he can't run this reservation."

To this Carignan replied: "I don't think he means to make trouble, but he is profoundly interested in this new religion. I think he will yield to reason."

There had already been a great deal of talk of the War Department sending someone to quiet the disturbance, and this the agent did not relish. He had been an Indian agent for many years and

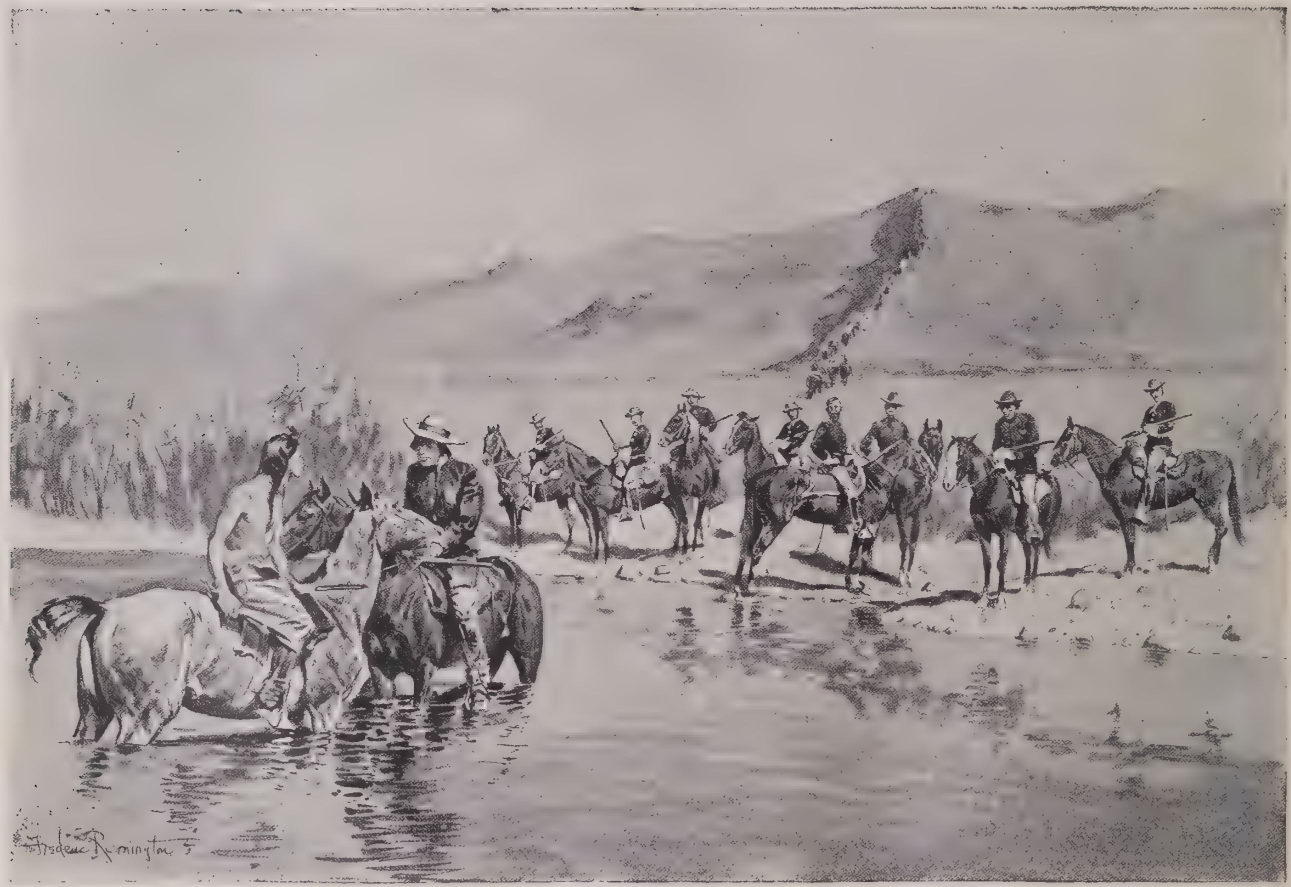


Scouts

These Indian scouts are on the trail of a Chiricahua Apache named Massai, famous in the 'nineties as the wildest and most cruel of the Apaches. So crooked was Massai's trail that even the Indians themselves could not follow it.

Illustration from
MASSAI'S CROOKED TRAIL
by Frederic Remington

Originally published in
HARPER'S MAGAZINE, *January, 1898*



On the Little Big Horn

When Cheschapah, son of the aged Crow chief, Pounded Meat, became a medicine-man and aspired to leadership of the tribe, a party of Sioux came on a visit to the Crows. Fearing that the feasting and eloquence of Cheschapah might turn their thoughts to war, troops were sent to bring the visitors home. The Sioux started for home meekly enough, but Cheschapah, with a yelling swarm of his young friends, began to buzz about the column, threatening to attack the troopers who had so rudely broken up their dinner party, and did not desist even when the soldiers had forded the river. Whereupon the chief of the Crow police rode out to Cheschapah, commanding him to turn back, and received for an answer an insult that with Indians calls for blood. But for old chief Pounded Meat, who then rode out to his son and cowed him with a last flare of command, firing would have begun then and there.

Illustration from
LITTLE BIG HORN MEDICINE
by Owen Wister

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prided himself on knowing how to handle his people, and was especially anxious to keep the chief authority entirely in his own hands. Poor and despised as The Sitting Bull had become, even the agent considered it an honor to arrest and imprison him. Furthermore, I could see that he did not care to attempt this except as a last resort.

The following morning the agent, Carignan, and myself went up to see The Sitting Bull. He was in his tepee, smoking beside a small smoldering fire. He was very cold and quiet, and looked tired and weak. His hair parted in the middle and the sad look of his face made him resemble an old woman. To me he was only a tragic wraith of his former self. His eyes were dull and heavy. He was a type of my vanishing race as he sat there, and my heart went out to him.

He greeted us with a low word and shook hands. We all sat about in the lodge. Few people were stirring.

"Tell the chief I have come to talk with him about this dance," began the agent.

I told the chief, and he said: "Speak on, my ears are open."

"Tell him I hear he is dancing this foolish dance almost every day, making his people tired, so that they neglect their cattle and have taken their children from school. Tell him that all the people are getting excited. Therefore, Washington says the dance must stop!" continued the agent.

I told the chief this. His face did not change, but his eyes fired a little. "Are the white people afraid of this new religion? Why do they wish to stop it?" he scornfully asked, in answer.

"Say to him that I do not fear the dance—I consider it foolish—but I do not want him wasting the energies of the people. He must stop it at once!"

To this the chief replied: "I am a reasonable man and a peacemaker. I do not seek trouble, but my people take comfort in this dance. They have lost many dear ones and in this dance they see them again. Whether it is true or not I have not yet made up my mind, but my people believe in it and I see no harm in it." Here he paused for a moment. "I have a proposition to make to you," he said firmly. "This new religion came to me from the Brulé Reservation; they got it from the west. The Mato and Kios claim to have seen the Messiah. Let us two, you and I, set forth together with intent to trail down this story of the Messiah. If, when we reach the last tribe in the land where the story originated, they cannot show us the Messiah or give us satisfactory proof, then we will return and I will tell my people that they have been too credulous. This report will end the dance forever. It will not do to order my people to stop; that will make them sure the dance is true magic."

The chief was very serious in this offer. He knew that he could not, by merely ordering it, stop the dance; but if he should go on this journey with the agent and make diligent inquiry, then he could on his return speak with authority. He made this offer as one reasonable man to another, and, had the agent met him halfway or even permitted him to send my father or Slohan, the final tragedy might have been averted, but the agent was too angry now to parley. His answer was contemptuous.

"Tell him I refuse to consider that. It is as crazy as the dance. It would only be a waste of time."

I urged him to accept, for in the months to follow the excitement would die out, but he would not listen.

"I will not consider it. It would be like trying to catch up the wind that blew last year. I do not care to argue here. Tell him to come to my house to-morrow and I will give him a night and a day to prove to me that he is not a foolish old man, chasing a will-o'-the-wisp."

To this the chief replied: "Are there miracles only in the white man's religion? I hear you believe there was once a great flood and all the people were drowned but a man and a woman, who took all the animals, male and female, into a big steamboat. When did this happen? How do you know it? Is the ghost dance more foolish? Are my people to be without a religion because it does not please the white man?"

To this the agent answered, impatiently: "I refuse to debate. I have orders to stop the dance, and these orders must be carried out. Tell him to come to the agency to-morrow and we will talk it out there. I can't do it now."

To my surprise, the chief pacifically responded: "I will come. My people are few and feeble, I do not wish to make trouble. Let us speak wisely in this matter. You are angry now and my people are excited. I will come and we will talk quietly together."

But the faces of the old guard were dark, and Black Bull, who stood near, cried out, saying: "Let us alone. We will not give up the dance. We are afraid. Send the coyote away! Is The Sitting Bull afraid?"

This touched the chief to the quick, and he said, "I am not, but I do not desire trouble."

My father spoke and said: "Do not go. The white man will imprison you if you do."

Black Bull again shouted: "The white man is a liar! His tongue is double. He has set a trap. Will you walk into it?"

The chief turned to me. "Is this true? Have they talked of putting me in prison?"

I could not deny this, and while I sat in silence, seeking words which would not inflame him, Catch the Bear said: "I have heard that they have planned to kill you. Do not go to the agency."

The chief was now convinced that the agent and myself had come to entice him into a snare. He rose, and his face took on the warrior's lionlike look as he said: "I will not go to the agency. I will not die in prison. If I am to die it will be here, as a soldier, on the spot where I was born."

Even then the agent could have won him by pacific speech, but he too was angry, and he said: "I give you till to-morrow morning to decide. If you do not come to the agency I will send the police and take you." He then went back to the school.

To Carignan he said, as he got into his wagon: "You had better send all your people up to the post. I am going to arrest The Sitting Bull to-night and it may make trouble," and in this spirit he drove away.

XIII

THE CHIEF PLANS A JOURNEY

THAT was a dark night in The Sitting Bull's camp. The women were weeping and the men, with faces sullen and fierce, gathered in solemn council. Black Wolf, Catch the Bear and The Two Strike loudly advocated resistance, their hot hearts aflame, but the chief kept on smoking his pipe, which is the sign of indecision. He was still the peace maker and concerned over the welfare of his people.

When he spoke he said: "To fight now is to die. The white man will crush us like flies. I know that for I have seen his armies. The happy hunting grounds are as near to me as to any of you, but I am not ready to die. I have thought deeply over the matter, and I have resolved not to fight, for unless we intend to kill all our children and so leave no one to follow us, the white man will visit his hate on those who remain. If the agent comes with his renegades to arrest me I will resist to the death, but if the soldiers come for me I will go with them, for they have the hearts of warriors and know how to treat a chief. This is my decision; but whatever comes, let no one interfere in my behalf, for to do so would only mean bloodshed, and that will do no good. I am your head—they will visit their punishment on me. I will meet them alone."

Thereupon he spoke to his "Silent Eaters" and said: "Put sentinels on the hills and keep watch on all that is done at the agency. Let no spy approach us."

The dance went on after that in a sort of frenzy, as if desperate by need. The cries of those who prayed were heartbreaking to hear. "O Great Spirit, save us; bring the happy land quickly, ere the white man slays us," this they wailed over and over again, for the days were fleet and the wolves of winter near.

When the chief did not appear as he had promised, then the agent drew a dead line between the agency and the camp, and brought into play the forces of hunger and cold. He sent word to all the Grand River people, commanding them to move up and go into permanent camp near the agency. "Those who do not come will be cut off from their rations." And to his clerk he said: "That will show the old chief's followers where they stand."

The effect of this order cannot be overstated. The north wind was now keen, and the people had little meat and no meal. They were dependent on the agency issue for their daily food. They were forbidden to leave the reservation to hunt and there was very little game left anywhere. This order drew the line sharply between those who had faith in the dance and those who only pretended to sympathize with it. To remain was to starve and freeze; to go was to acknowledge the final supremacy of the white man and all he stood for. Such was the desolating decision thrust upon them.

When the order reached The Sitting Bull's camp the dancers were thrown into confusion. A hurried council was called and the leaders were soon decided on the question of giving up the dance. Most of them at once said: "It is of no use. The Great Spirit has not heard us. There is but one thing to do. Let us obey the agent. To fight is foolish."

There were others who said: "What does a few months of life in captivity matter? Let us dance, and if the white man comes to fight let us all die like braves." And as they spoke the women began to sing old battle songs, urging resistance to the invaders. "We can starve and die, for when we die we go to the happy land. A little pain and all is over. Let us fight!"

As soon as the chief had thought the matter out he said: "So long as I have cattle or money you shall be fed," but he had little left. He had already given all he had.

I do not know the mind of my chief at this point. I think that at times when his indignation mounted high he, too, said: "Let us fight to the death. The happy hunting grounds are near. They await us. Why do we continue in our hunger and despair?" And then, as some good man spoke to him, recalled to him the friends he had among the palefaces, he had a gleam of hope, and recalled his bitter words.

That he was not afraid I know. Death held nothing appalling. Life offered little. Why should he fear to die? He was fifty-six years old and his days were nearly done. Furthermore, he could not look into the future without pain, for he saw his people slaves or vagabonds among an alien race.

During these weeks fear and hate of him revived among the settlers in all the Western states and the papers were filled with demands for his death. The near-by white settlers called loudly for troops, and some of those to the north went so far as to patrol the borders of the reservation in order to meet the warriors of The Sitting Bull when they broke forth in war array. They were glad of an excuse to utter their charges against us as cumberers of the earth, which they desired. Feeling the millions of their fellows back of them and knowing that troops were near, they were very brave.

In spite of the agent's cruel order, a large number of the sternest warriors of the Uncapappas remained at Rock Creek, and when he saw this he was afraid to carry out his plan for arresting the chief. With intent to league himself with cold and snow, he waited for winter to fall, keeping vigilant eye on the War Department, lest the Secretary should steal away the honor of arresting the chief. He was not anxious to invite interference on the part of the military. "I can take care of the reservation," he repeated to the commander of the post.

The chief understood his feeling and said to my father: "I will obey the orders of the great war chief, but I will not be ordered about by this agent. He has used me like a dog. The Great Father at Washington said to me: 'Sitting Bull, you are the head of the Sioux nation, and I hold you responsible for the conduct of your people. Keep the peace.' I promised him that I would do this, but the agent has always turned his back to me or has thrown words at me that are like stones or mud. He has lied about me and his letters have made the settlers angry. He now wishes to shut me up merely that he can smile and say: 'I am a great chief; I have conquered The Sitting Bull.' This I will not permit him to do."

Therefore, his armed sentries continued to ride the buttes surrounding the camp. No one could come within twenty miles of his camp without seeing shadowy horsemen appear and disappear on the high hills. Every blanket concealed a weapon, while the dance went on almost day and night, and one by one his cattle were killed and eaten, till at last all were gone.

My own position became each day more intolerable. Within my heart opposing passions warred. Here were my brothers about to fight their last battle — persisting in a defiance which was as insane as their religion. I could not deceive myself. The instant I returned to the white men and the sight of my books I acknowledged the tragic desperation of my people. The dance became merely another of the religious frenzies which wise men say have attacked the human race, at intervals, for ten thousand years. A letter from The Blackbird said: "Keep away, Philip. Don't mix in that mess. You can do no good. Your letter makes it evident that a tragic end is inevitable. You have done all you can. Throw in your lot with the white man. On the whole, the white man has the organization for the new conditions. To die with your people would be superb, but it would be wasteful. Don't do it, my boy. Use your best influence against violence, but avoid danger. There is work for you to do in helping your people bridge the chasm between their mode of life and ours."

I told him that I was already denounced as a coward and a traitor to my race. He replied: "No matter; ten years from now those who are still alive will see you in the light of a wise leader." And in the spirit of this letter I sent word to my chief, saying that it was best to accept the agent's rule.

The department did not like to be called rash; it feared the influence of the Indians' friends in the East and so it hesitated, and these days of waiting were days of torture to us all. I could not look any man in the face. I went about my duties as if I, too, were in a trance. I really could have been called a spy, for when one of the scouts of my father asked me what was going on at the agency I told him I was under suspicion by both races and knew not where to turn for comfort.

The agent required my presence in his office each day, and to see my father and my chief meant a night ride of nearly eighty miles. This I dared not attempt, for the chief now reasoned that I had surely gone over to the enemy and I was certain he would not let me come to him. I was despised and rejected of both white man and red man, and had no one to comfort me.

The weather continued mild. Each day I searched the sky for signs of a storm. If only a tempest of snow would sweep over us it would stop the dancing, it would cool the fury of anger, and yet when the hate and contempt of the white man broke forth in my presence I hoped that my chief would fight. Better to die like the lion than live like a trapped wolf.

Meanwhile the chief and his little band continued to test the new religion, but the Chief was not satisfied.

"Why do these visions come only to the women and weak men? Why do they not come to my 'Silent Eaters?' Why does it not happen that I can go and see these things and return?"

He was growing weary of his prison and longed for the bright world where the spirits were. At last he came to a great resolution. He determined to leave the reservation and visit The Kicking Bear in order to learn more of the Messiah. He wished to know whether any new revelation had been made to other tribes. He had exhausted the value of the phenomena in his own camp and remained unconvinced.

He said: "The agent is going to send for me soon. I may go to the agency and I may not. No matter. You must not get into trouble on my account."

Can you imagine what it means to a chief, when his proud, free race sinks to the position of beggars and children, forbidden to trade, forbidden to hunt, forbidden to make presents, ordered into line like cattle, debarred from amusement like convicts, and condemned to wear the white man's cast-off clothing?

"If this religion is true, then we may hope. If it is not, then all is over," he said. "I will myself go seek those who saw the wonder worker. Perhaps I shall find him and he will take pity on us and save us from destruction. Wait patiently till I return, for then you will know the truth."

He arranged to leave at daybreak, and his guard was to follow him later to see that he was not mistreated. There were not many of the "Silent Eaters" now, but they were ready to go where he went, and die with him if need rose.

I do not pretend to follow the turnings of his mind, but I think he had resolved to leave the reservation even at the risk of being arrested and brought back by the police, considering that the word and the promise he sought to verify were worth more than anything else on the earth.

It must have been in some such mood that he prepared for his long journey, while still the dance went on, and the white people accused him of leading a revolt.

XIV

THE DEATH OF THE CHIEF

The news of the chief's intended departure, which was brought to the agent by a spy, decided him to act at once. In accordance with instructions from the department he went to Colonel Drum, the commander of the garrison, and arranged to seize the chief before he rose the next morning. The native police were to make the arrest, but the troops were to be within supporting distance and to share in the honor!

The leaders of the police were enemies of the chief. The Shave Head was especially malignant. The reason was this: When The Sitting Bull visited the Crows in 1884 Shave Head accompanied him. During a dance one night the Crows grossly insulted the visitors and Shave Head wished to kill them, but the chief counseled mild speaking. "We must not quarrel," he said, and went away. Shave Head was very angry, and for his forbearance called The Sitting Bull a coward, when, as a matter of fact, a single gesture by this reckless fool might have involved the whole camp in an uproar. Thereafter he lost no opportunity for insulting and annoying the chief, who bore it patiently, knowing that a harsh word in reply would only make matters worse.

Big Head, the lieutenant of police, was also opposed to the chief; in truth the entire force was carefully chosen from those hangers-on at the agency or from the Yanktonaise, ready, under the white man's pay, to act against the chief, whose contempt for such traitors and weaklings was well known. In the days of The Sitting Bull's power these factions existed. The Gall and The Gray Bear were jealous of his great fame, although The Gall never became actually disloyal. The Gray Bear did and lost no chance of doing his old chief harm. It is a disgraceful thing to say of my people, but some of them, for a new uniform and twenty dollars, would kill their blood relatives. Witness the so-called "scouts" of the army in Arizona.

My father says that The Sitting Bull advised against all violence, but I must admit that his supporters were armed and that they had sworn to protect him against mistreatment. Perhaps he accepted their loyalty gratefully, and when he decided to go forth on his search for the Messiah they asked to go with him in a body.

It would not seem strange to me if he had decided never to be taken from his people alive.

He was growing old, and to suffer exile would be to die lingeringly. How much he knew of the agent's plan to imprison him I do not know, but I have heard him assert his right (which the commissioner had orally given him) to come and go as any other citizen of the state. As chief man of his nation he considered it a gross injustice to be told, "You shall not cross this line." "So long as I go peaceably and feed myself I do not see what right the agent has to object. Washington has said it and I go."

On the night before his departure he addressed the "Silent Eaters." "Be peaceful, do nothing harsh," he said; "wait for my return. I go to visit Mato. Perhaps he has a new message for us. Perhaps he has again visited the Messiah. If he has not, then we will go together."

He was at the dance till midnight and, being weary was still sleeping soundly when just before dawn Bull Head and seven other renegades gathered silently round his bed.

As Bull Head laid a hand on him the chief opened his eyes and quietly asked. "What do you want?"

"Be silent. The agent wants you to come to him," Bull Head replied in a low voice. "Get up quickly."

The chief lay for a time in thought. He saw the armed men and knew them to be enemies. Across the room his wife was sleeping with her children. Resistance would mean death. He did not wish to die in her presence.

"Very well," he said, calmly, "I will go." He partly rose. "But I must dress. It is cold, I wish to wear my new overcoat. Let me wake my wife to fetch it."

Bull Head, less savage than Shave Head, said: "Good. We will wait," but as the wife realized what these men had come to do she began to wail, "They will take him away," and this wakened the children, who also began to cry.

Soon many feet were heard running rapidly. Catching up their blankets and concealing their rifles beneath their garments, the "Silent Eaters" came hurrying to the rescue, not knowing what was happening, but ready for battle.

The whole camp was in a tumult before Bull Head could rush The Sitting Bull to the threshold.

One of the first of the old guard was The Bear Catcher, a man of fiery resolution, who cried out in a loud voice: "They are taking our chief. Let us prevent them."

Bull Head replied: "The agent has ordered it. Keep away!"

Bear Catcher again cried: "Let us stop this thing," and, flinging aside his blanket, leveled his rifle at Bull Head and fired. The renegade fell, but in falling shot the chief. At almost the same instant Shave Head, recreant dog, seized the opportunity to put a bullet into the great heart of my chief, who fell and died without speaking a word, while the battle went on above his prostrate body.

For a time nothing could be heard but the shouts of the warring ones and the crack of their guns. When it was ended eight of the "Silent Eaters" lay dead beside their chief, and with them fell four renegades who went to their tragic end under a mistaken call of duty — to be forever execrated for slaying their chief at the white man's command.

Taking shelter in the house, the other traitors killed the mute son of the chief and were about to be burned out by the "Silent Eaters" when the sound of a cannon on the hill announced the coming of the soldiers. The renegades were saved by the bluecoats.

It is well that the body of my chief fell into the hands of his honorable enemies, for it was being mutilated when the colonel interfered. There were Sioux warriors so misbegotten that they were ready to crush the dead lion's helpless head, but the white commander of the garrison took every precaution that the bones of the chief should lie undisturbed in death.

The post surgeon at Fort Yates received the body and prepared it for burial. In the afternoon of the following day it was sewn up in canvas and placed in a coffin and buried in the northeast corner of the military cemetery, without ceremony and with few to mourn, though far away my people were waiting in unappeasable grief over the passing of their great leader.

And so it is that in spite of vandal white men and traitorous reds the dust of my chieftain lies undisturbed in a neglected corner of a drear little military graveyard, near the Great Muddy River which was the eastern boundary of his lands. The sod is hot with untempered sun in summer, and piled with snow in winter, but in early spring the wild roses bloom on the primeval sod above his bones. No hand cares for the grave, no one visits it, and yet, nevertheless, the name written on that whitewashed board is secure on the walls of the red man's pantheon, together with that of Red Jacket and Tecumseh, Osceola and Black Hawk. Civilization marches above his face, but the heel of the oppressor cannot wear from the record of his race the name of "Ta-tank-yo-tanka," The Sitting Bull.

He epitomized the epic, tragic story of my kind. His life spanned the gulf between the days of our freedom and the death of every custom native to us. He saw the invader come and he watched the buffalo disappear. Within the half century of his conscious life he witnessed greater changes and comprehended more of my tribe's tragic history than any other red man.

These are the words of my father, the chief of the "Silent Eaters," and his voice was tremulous as he spoke them: "Ta-tank-yo-tanka was a great chief and a good man. He had nothing bad about him. He was ever peacemaker, and just and honorable in his dealings. He cared only for the good of his people. He was unselfish and careful of others. He will grow bigger like a mountain as he recedes into the past. He was chief among red men and we shall never see his like again. If the Great Spirit does not hate his red children, our Father is happy in the home of the spirits — the land of the returning buffalo."

THE END

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